Saturday Review

JUNE 30, 1956 / 20¢

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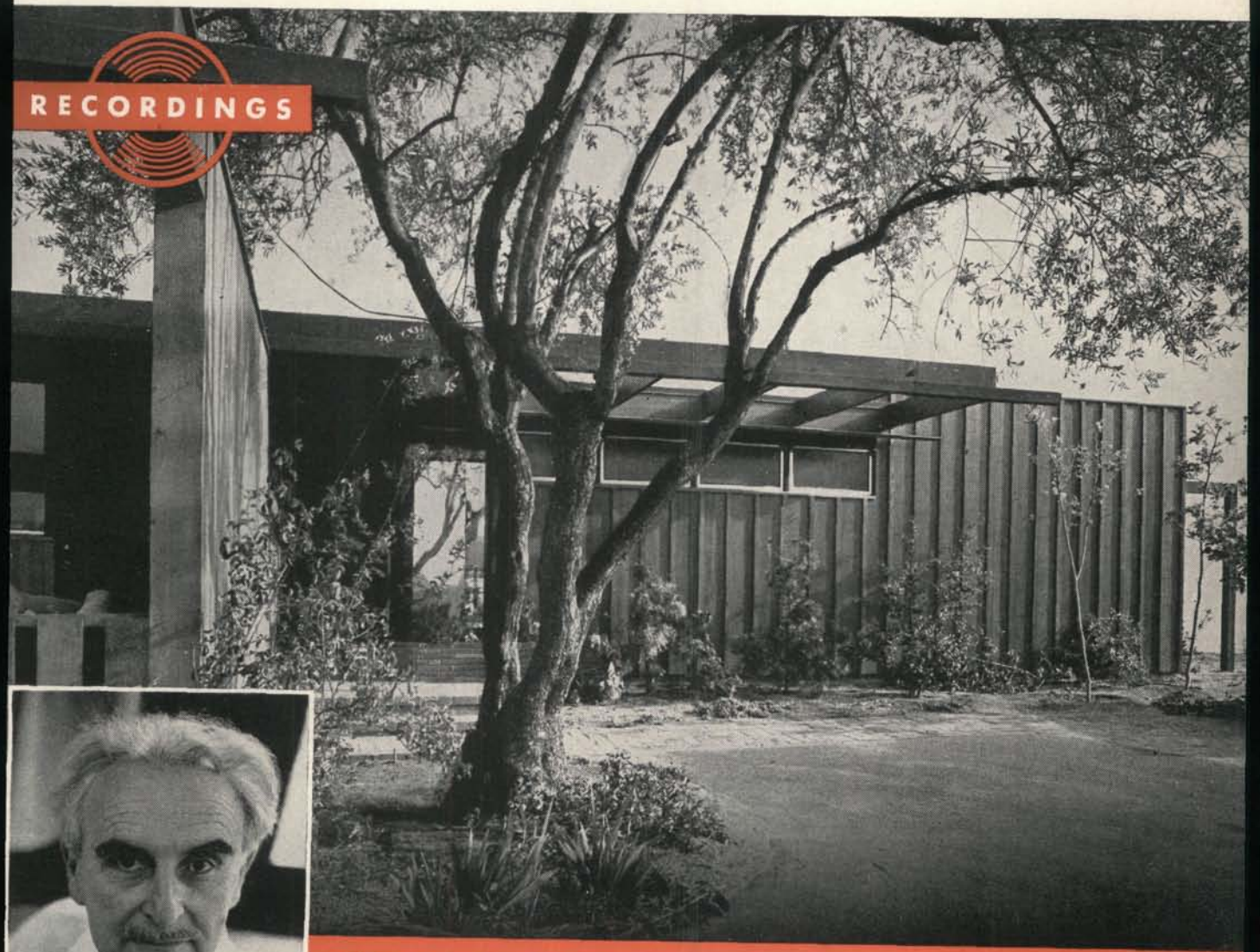

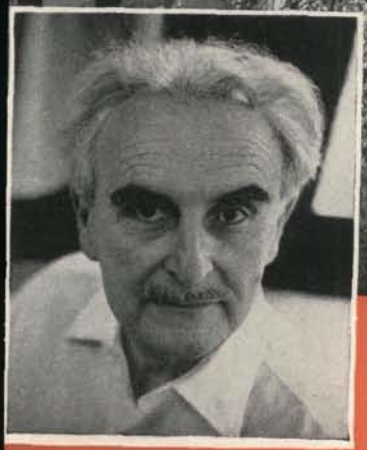

Richard Neutra and his design for a Hollywood Hills home. (Page 9)

WANTED: MORE SPACE FOR MORE MINDS

By Harry and Bonaro Overstreet

THE PIANO AND THE ALCHEMIST

By Fred Grunfeld

"LA STRADA": FILM CLASSIC

By Arthur Knight

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The Saturday Review

JUNE 30, 1956

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THE SATURDAY REVIEW, published weekly by the Saturday Review Associates, Inc., 25 W. 45th Street, New York 36, N. Y. E. De Golyer, Chairman of the Board; Harrison Smith, President; J. R. Cominsky, Publisher, Executive Vice President and Treasurer; Norman Cousins, Vice President; Nathan Cohn, Assistant Treasurer and Business Manager; Robert A. Burghardt, Advertising Director; Bert Garmise, Circulation Director; Ray Goodman, Circulation Manager; Marion Urmy, Assistant to the Publisher. Subscription $7 a year; $8 in Canada. Member Audit Bureau of Circulations. Printed in U.S. Vol. XXXIX, No. 26, June 30, 1956. Re-entered as second-class matter January 11, 1952, at the Post Office in New York, N. Y., with additional entry at Philadelphia, Pa., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Indexed in the "Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature." Entire issue copyright 1956 by Saturday Review Associates, Inc.

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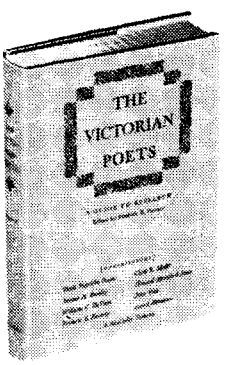

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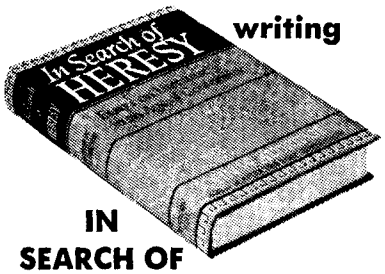

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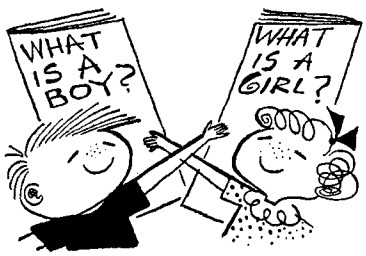
VIVE LA DIFFERENCE!

IF MAIL RESPONSE or requests for reprints are any criterion the most successful leaflets ever distributed by a private company in America are a pair of brief essays entitled, respectively, "What Is a Boy?" and "What Is a Girl?" They were written by Alan Beck for the New England Mutual Life Insurance Company, which owns the copyrights.

To date the company itself has distributed over 2,000,000 copies of each of these essays. There have been over



1,000 authorized reprints—and some, possibly innocently, just "copied." Figure in republication in the *Saturday Evening Post, The Reader's Digest, The New York Times,* and other newpapers, and the total circulation becomes almost astronomical.

"Which essay has proven the most popular?" I asked author Alan Beck. "I'd say it was about a stand-off," he replied cautiously. "After all, they're both cut from the same pattern. I think the Girl essay is better written because it was done 'on purpose' whereas the Boy essay originally was just an editorial in our company magazine, *The Pilot's Log.* I had no idea anyone would give it more than a casual reading!"

Beck treasures a letter from one lady which concluded, "For a long time my husband refused to have any children, but after hearing 'What Is a Boy?' on the radio he has changed his mind." There also was a request from a distinguished matriarch worded, "I have three great granddaughters, five granddaughters, and four daughters. Please send me a copy of 'What Is a Girl?' (as if I didn't know!)."

The essays have been translated into more than a dozen languages, put into *The Congressional Record,* transcribed into Braille, used by the State Department in Japan, recorded by Victor, Columbia, and Decca, and beamed behind the Iron Curtain on the Voice of America. Ministers have used them in sermons; prison publications featured them; doctors handed them to prospective fathers. Framed copies hang on every kind of wall—from convents to barrooms.

Is it possible that you may have overlooked one or both of these essays yourself? With that thought in mind they are reprinted here, by permission of Alan Beck and New England Mutual.

What Is a Boy?

Between the innocence of babyhood and the dignity of manhood we find a delightful creature called a boy. Boys come in assorted sizes, weights, and colors, but all boys have the same creed: To enjoy every second of every minute of every hour of every day and to protest with noise (their only weapon) when their last minute is finished and the adult males pack them off to bed at night.

Boys are found everywhere—on *top of, underneath, inside of,* climbing on, swinging from, running around, or jumping to. Mothers love them, little girls hate them, older sisters and brothers

tolerate them, adults ignore them, and Heaven protects them. A boy is Truth with dirt on its face, Beauty with a cut on its finger, Wisdom with bubble gum in its hair, and the Hope of the future with a frog in its pocket.

When you are busy a boy is an inconsiderate, bothersome, intruding jangle of noise. When you want him to make a good impression his brain turns to jelly or else he becomes a savage, sadistic, jungle creature bent on destroying the world and himself with it.

A boy *is a composite*—he has the appetite of a horse, the digestion of a sword swallower, the energy of a pocket-size atomic bomb, the curiosity of a cat, the lungs of a dictator, the imagination of a Paul Bunyan, the shyness of a violet, the audacity of a steel trap, the enthusiasm of a fire cracker, and when he makes

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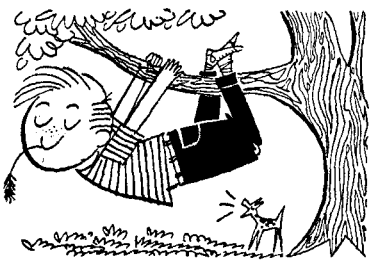
something he has five thumbs on each hand.

He likes ice cream, knives, saws, Christmas, comic books, the boy across the street, woods, water (in its natural habitat), large animals, Dad, trains, Saturday mornings, and fire engines. He is not much for Sunday school, company, schools, books without pictures, music lessons, neckties, barbers, girls, overcoats, adults, or bedtime.

Nobody else is so early to rise, or so late to supper. Nobody else



gets so much fun out of trees, dogs, and breezes. Nobody else can cram into one pocket a rusty knife, a half-eaten apple, three feet of string, an empty Bull Durham sack, two gum drops, six cents, a sling shot, a chunk of unknown substance, and a genuine supersonic code ring with a secret compartment.

A boy is a magical creature—you can lock him out of your workshop, but you can't lock him out of your heart. You can get him out of your study, but you can't get him out of your mind. Might as well give up—he is your captor, your jailer, your boss, and your master—a freckled-face, pint-sized, cat-chasing bundle of noise. But when you come home at night with only the shattered pieces of your hopes and dreams he can mend them like new with two magic words—"Hi, Dad!"

What Is a Girl?

Little girls are the nicest things that happen to people. They are

born with a little bit of angel-shine about them and though it wears thin sometimes there is always enough left to lasso your heart—even when they are sitting in the mud, or crying temperamental tears, or parading up the

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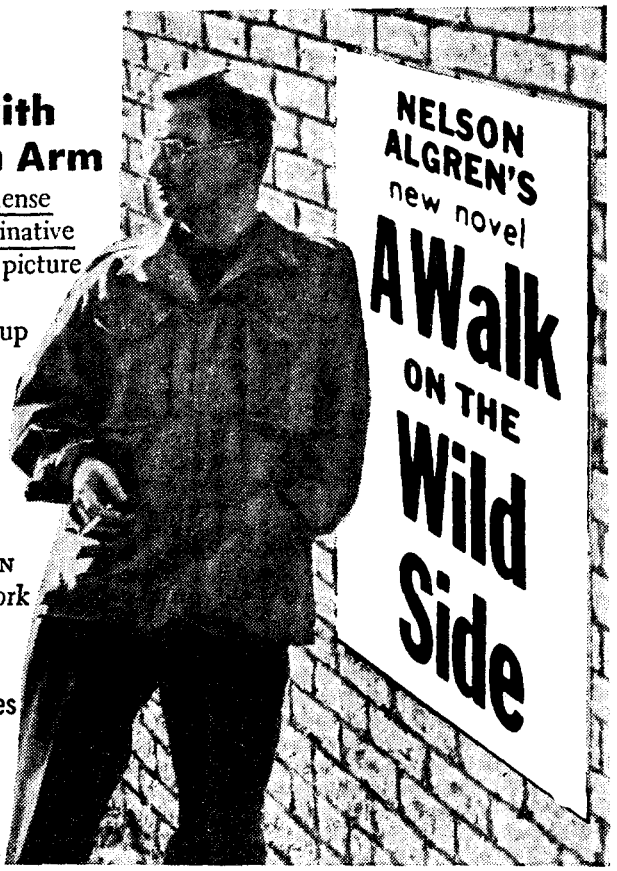

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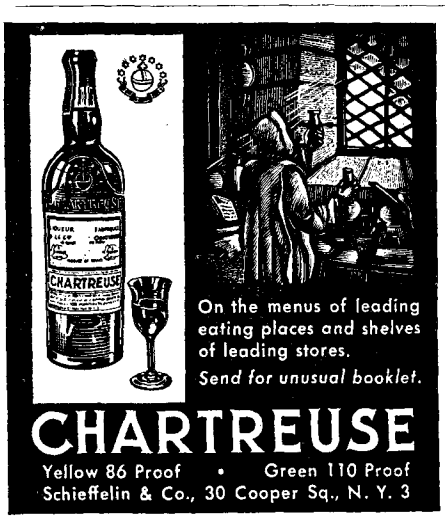

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street in mother's best clothes.

A little girl can be sweeter (and badder) oftener than anyone else in the world. She can jitter around, and stomp, and make funny noises that frazzle your nerves, yet just when you open your mouth she stands there demure with that special look in her eyes. A girl is Innocence playing in the mud, Beauty standing on its head, and Motherhood dragging a doll by the foot.

Girls are available in five colors, —black, white, red, yellow, or brown, yet Mother Nature always manages to select your favorite color when you place your order. They disprove the law of supply and demand—there are millions of little girls, but each is as precious as rubies.

God borrows from many creatures to make a little girl. He uses the song of a bird, the squeal of a pig, the stubbornness of a mule, the antics of a monkey, the spryness of a grasshopper, the curiosity of a cat, the speed of a gazelle, the slyness of a fox, the softness of a kitten, and to top it all off He adds the mysterious mind of a woman.

A little girl likes new shoes, party dresses, small animals, first-grade noise makers, the girl next door, dolls, make-believe, dancing lessons, ice cream parlors, coloring books, make-up, cans of water, going visiting, tea parties, and one boy. She doesn't care so much for visitors, boys in general, large dogs, hand-me-downs, straight chairs, vegetables, snow suits, or *staying in the front yard.* She is loudest when you are thinking, the prettiest when she has provoked you, the busiest at bedtime, the quietest when you want to show her off, and the most flirtatious when she absolutely must not get the best of you again.

Who else can cause you more grief, joy, irritation, satisfaction, embarrassment, and genuine delight than this combination of Eve, Salome, and Florence Nightingale? She can muss up your home, your hair, and your dignity—spend your money, your time, and your temper—then just when your patience is ready to crack, her sunshine peeks through and you've lost again.

Yes, she is a nerve-racking nuisance, just a noisy bundle of mischief. But when your dreams tumble down and the world is a mess—when it seems you are pretty much of a fool after all—she can make you a king when she climbs on your knee and whispers, "I love you best of all!"

I HOPE ALAN BECK will write some more essays in exactly the same vein for New England Mutual—and the world at large. How many seconds do I hear to the motion? —BENNETT CERF.

Literary Sampler

WASHINGTON IS DIFFERENT: Some rock-ribbed realists insist that for many life in Washington is pretty humdrum, just "home town," that you can't expect to meet, informally or otherwise, any of its more distinguished residents.

But I say, what about the time I ran into an attorney general going with his ten-year-old to an F Street movie? Or eavesdropped on the sari-robed wife of an ambassador as she shopped for her family in Hecht's at Seventh and F? Or *sympathized with the agitation* of the girl across the street who wanted to throw away all her furniture and get new because Mamie Eisenhower was coming that afternoon for bridge?

Yes, it's home town, but with a magic difference.

—From "Washington Is Wonderful," by Dorothea Jones (Harper).

ARTERIES OF THE WORLD: Rivers have played an almost incalculable part in the story of mankind. Human life originated and flourished along their banks, so that river valleys have frequently been likened to cradles. The valley of the Tigris and Euphrates, for instance, has been called the cradle of Babylonian culture. Rivers have been termed highways, opening up large areas to exploration and cultivation. The Mississippi is a good example of this. Rivers have also served as barriers and boundaries separating groups, as in the case of the Rio Grande; a river may be the common factor binding groups together, the economic backbone supporting a civilization, as in the case of the Nile. Some rivers, like the Ganges, have been regarded as sacred objects of worship; and same have been used as symbols, so that there are people who refer to dying as "crossing over the River Jordan." A surprising number of wars boil down to jealous disagreement over the control of a river basin, no matter what other contributory causes for fighting there may be. The Saar illustrates this point.

In fact, it would be impossible to expunge the mention of rivers from any history, just as it would be impossible to maintain life, whether plant or animal, on the face of the globe without rivers; and it would be extremely difficult, if not actually impossible, even with modern technology, to continue our present rate of agricultural and industrial productivity. Rivers are the veins and arteries of the world.

—From "The Coast of Maine," by Louise Dickinson Rich (Crowell).

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The Saturday Review

JUNE 30, 1956

WANTED: MORE SPACE FOR MORE MINDS

By HARRY and BONARO OVERSTREET

"Dog eat dog" is the first axiom of history, and the biggest dog with the sharpest teeth generally gets hailed as Hero and Supercitizen. But mankind has taken this principle about as far as we can. More and more people see that in the next century a jampacked society must learn to live in larger dimensions and on gentler terms than we have done: in communities, *where patience and compassion are both popular and necessary virtues. The morale of such a society, and how it is to continue encouraging the creative spirit, is the subject of this article by Harry and Bonaro Overstreet, famous educators, writers, lecturers, and co-authors. The piece is excerpted from their book "The Mind Goes Forth," to be published in July by W. W. Norton and Company.*

DURING the First World War Carl Sandburg wrote, in tribute to the aviators and scientists of that time:

> They have taken the ball of earth and made it a little thing . . .
>
> There are no bars across the way . . .

When these confident words were first published we did not yet know what the totalitarian dictators have since taught us: that there is a different sense in which the ball of earth can be made "a little thing"—too small for anyone to escape the watchful eyes of those who may report him for the slightest deviation. We did not then know what we have since learned about ideological "bars across the way."

But modern society should direct man's wonderful tools and self-knowledge in the opposite path: to open up new opportunities, more space, to the creative aspirations of each individual, to exert the same sort of beneficent, encouraging influence on each man's spirit that Nature—sun and water and air—exerts on the plants and animals of the world.

The institutions of any given society are, we might say, the durable frame of action within which the members of that society either feel crowded, pushed around, on guard, robotized, or, on the other hand, free to become their unique and contributive selves. A sound institution is not a static force in the human scene. Neither is it a dictatorial force—one that arbitrarily bends and twists human personality to match its purposes. It is more like God: a creative force exerting a creative influence.

If this can be said about a sound institution, then certain closely related things can be said about a sound society:

First, it is one in which most of the institutions, most of the time, have this sort of creative effect upon individuals—of giving them room to grow, be themselves, and make a contribution that is an honest "outwarding" of themselves;

Second, it is one in which no members are arbitrarily excluded from the experiences and advantages provided by its basic institutions;

Third, it has achieved such stability

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and clarity of intent that all its basic institutions support rather than contradict one another's influence—so that the individual is not subjected to constant pulling and hauling, with resultant inner conflict and loss of integrity, as he moves, say, from home to school, place of work to polling booth, or playground to place of worship;

Fourth, it has insured itself against rigidity by providing, in all its major institutions, for processes of orderly change—so that it manages to combine stability with flexibility, and itself grows through the insights and efforts of those in whom it has encouraged growth.

When we think of a society in these terms—of the creative influence it exerts and the room it provides for growth and individuality—we begin to see what the major issues of our age are all about. They are, in essence, issues that have to do with making institutions, societies, and more broadly still a world in which psychic space is wide and sure; in which human beings are far more often engaged in using their powers constructively than in simply defending themselves; and in which they are not crowded, pushed into corners, trapped, distorted, and stunted.

We are exceedingly lucky in our Western civilization, and specifically in this country, in the fact that so many of our bedrock institutions are space-making. In its essence our constitutional government is as well designed to grant "living space" and "growing space" as any institution on earth has ever been. This is not merely a political fact. It is a psychological fact. To state it as such is not to be guilty of chauvinism or boasting. It is simply to acknowledge an opportunity and a responsibility; and to learn how vital both of these are we have only to look at the world as it now is. First among the space-making factors in our culture we would name the Constitution itself—with its provision for checks and balances and for orderly change—and those "roomy" amendments we name the Bill of Rights.

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof. . . ." To feel the breadth of space guaranteed by these words we have only to think of the long centuries of religious coercion, persecution, and war that the human race had struggled through before the words could be written. The Constitutional Congress did not, obviously, conjure up this first provision of the Bill of Rights out of nothing—or out of sudden revelation. Rather, it reported what the colonists had learned the hard way: that when any one religion makes itself the only one, insisting upon its right to define for all men the proper relationship of man to the universe, it becomes so small that even its own willing adherents are "crowded" within it. They begin to move in prescribed, ritualized circles; and their minds become so preoccupied with distinctions between saved and damned that they no longer venture toward sublimity. Most of what is tantalizingly unknown about the universe is thus crowded out of consciousness.

These Constitutional words guaranteed another sort of "roominess," moreover, that we often overlook in talking about religious freedom. They made it not only lawful but culturally acceptable for persons of different faiths to talk together without trying to argue each other down or browbeat each other into conformity. In brief, they gave us a right to be generous and civil rather than coercive and cruel in the face of the mystery that is life.

A human being can, of course, be granted room to move and yet not move. In a mental hospital, for example, we may witness the rigid immobility of the catatonic: the type of insane person who stays precisely in the same position for hours on end. It makes no difference to this victim of catatonia whether the room he is in is large or small; for he is not going anywhere.

It would be extreme, perhaps, to say that sometimes, in the very areas where the most generous room to move has been granted them, our minds practise a sort of voluntary catatonia: they go nowhere, simply stay put.

SO FAR as religious freedom is concerned, it seems to us that three directions of movement are constantly called for if the human mind, as well as the institution, is to remain free. One involves searching for a frame of belief able to hold otherwise disparate scraps of experience together and give them meaning. A second, within the frame of this belief, is that of trying to move toward ever new vistas of insight: in brief, of keeping ourselves in touch with the elusively unknown. The third is a movement—in behalf of mutual illumination and shared effort—toward those of different denominational and religious faiths.

We would note, in passing, that to our minds this third movement should include not only those who have found their faiths, but those who have not. Many persons, today, frightened by Communist atheism—by the phenomenon, that is, of a coercive "state religion" made out of a denial of religion—seem ready to start among ourselves a new enterprise of "crowding." While they grant that the individual should indeed be free to choose among established creeds and religions, they take the attitude that he had better make his choice *among these* and not dare to remain outside of them all. On the other hand, many who elect to remain outside all established creeds and religions exhibit their own sin of pride. The catatonic atheism of the person who never talks to a religious believer except to argue with him, or about any religion except in tones of contempt—and with absolutistic sureness about what is not true—is at no far remove from catatonic orthodoxy. Neither the catatonic

(*Continued on page 27*)

The Orange Picker

By David Ignatow

I WAS tempted to the grove by its odor;
the tang lingered over the whole countryside,
and from the hilltop where I stood
orange was the banner laid out like a signal,
of which I had no exact notion,
but of itself it seemed a goal:
to be overwhelmed in its odor.

I came downhill
and saw these men at work,
on ladders to pick oranges;
they were not tall enough;
and as I watched I too was drawn in.
And now as I labor,
the days going by redolent–
I have breathed in them too long to be curious—
these oranges have failed me.

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SR's Book of the Week:

"LIFE AND HUMAN HABITAT"

Author: Richard Neutra

By PAUL LESTER WIENER, *internationally-known city planner.*

FOR TWENTY-FIVE YEARS Richard Neutra has been known as one of the staunchest fighters for contemporary architecture. His influence on the profession has been profound and valuable. A large public has become acquainted with his architecture through discussions and illustrations in many magazines and his work has been widely debated. By his insistence on great simplicity, as expressed in the persistent use of large surfaces of glass and dramatic spacial arrangements of the houses he built in the Californian landscape, he made his early professional years difficult. Mr. Neutra has a certain kinship with Frank Lloyd Wright, but his interests roam even farther and wider.

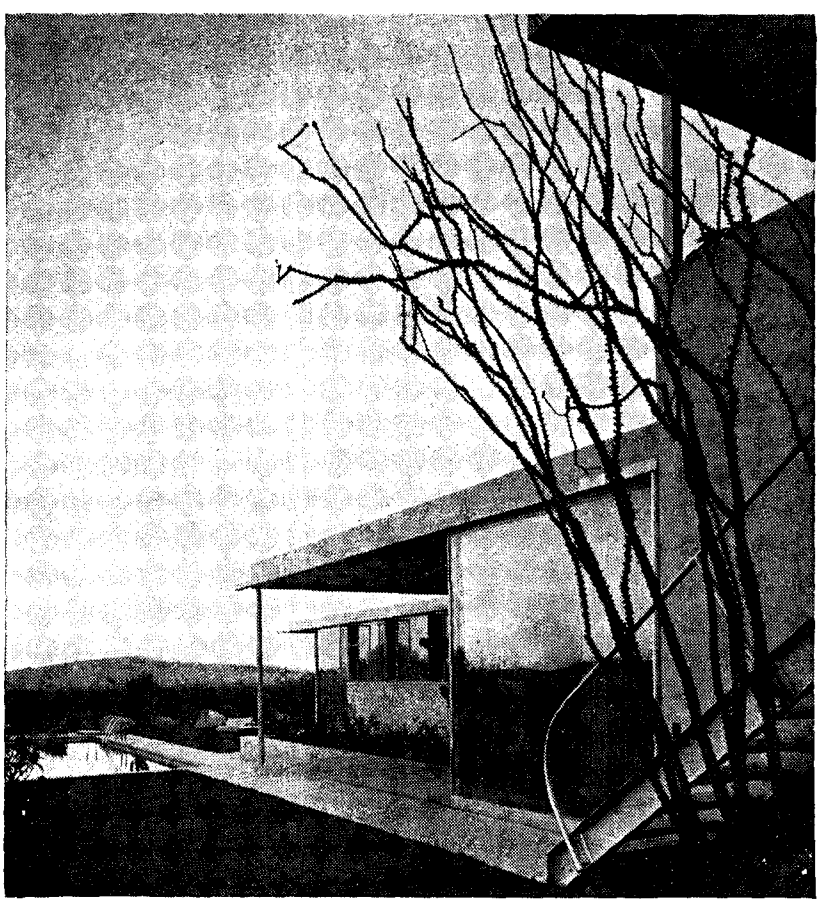
In his book "Survival Through Design," published in 1954, Neutra revealed himself as a man deeply interested in all phases of life which can contribute to a more harmonious physical and spiritual existence. His new book, "Life and Human Habitat" (Wittenborn & Co., $18), supplements the earlier book—which, incidentally, seems destined for wide influence through German, Italian, and Spanish editions. The two volumes should be read together, although the new book reprints a chapter and some ideas from the first. While "Survival Through Design," without illustrations, is a literary presentation of his thinking over a period of twenty-five years, "Life and Human Habitat" is primarily a handsome picture album of his architecture. It is apparently designed to demonstrate the application of his probings into the field of philosophy and physiology to the problems of daily living.

Neutra sees the designer of the future as a man "endowed with a perilous power of design capable of producing or effacing disturbances of our inner equilibrium, our organic harmony, and influencing happenings and functions that play deep down within us in a manner much too subtle to be compared with function or failure of inorganic machines." He feels that the architect has a great responsibility to provide a life of sanity and the continuance of humanity in the midst of the framework of buildings and cities that surrounds and constrains us. And he pleads for a conception of design that well becomes the human organism, "not adding to life's wear and tear but serving wholesomeness and happy survival." There will be complete agreement with such an approach among professionals and the public.

However, the statements of his opening chapter, entitled "Summaries in Advance," are more difficult to subscribe to. Neutra refers to his physiological findings in tracing the early steps that one experiences upon approaching a house—"taking in a wealth of sense impressions from the faint smell and exhalation of organic microbiotic life in the soil, the lawn, and the scent of the shrubs in the front yard. . . ." Even without high-falutin' phrases it is obvious that all human senses are invoked in viewing and living within a house and they are therefore the proper concern of good architects. Multi-sensorial impressions, however, must be individual; therefore, it would seem difficult to design for their manifold kind.

As a matter of fact, these and other provocative statements that Neutra offers in "Life and Human Habitat" are not readily apparent in the photographs of the volume, handsome as they are. Perhaps it is not even possible to render in architectural terms such physiological, philosophic, and psychological considerations. Certainly no two people would agree upon sensory interpretations.

AS IN "Survival Through Design," Neutra keeps referring in his new book to things "organic." This word, derived from biology, has been loosely applied by Frank Lloyd Wright and other architects; it is now not only a cliche, it creates confusion. A house is not living tissue, but an artifact. It should be defined accurately as possessed of a complex structure forming a totality and a determined unity in which the relationships of the parts involve relationships to the whole,



—*From the book.*

A Neutra desert house—". . . human senses are the proper concern of good architects."

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which itself is comparatively free from external relationships. Although a house is not a living organism, ideally it should serve the life processes of its inhabitants and changing family patterns insofar as this is possible.

Even if he has no predilection for quasi-scientific probing any wise and cultured architect, especially any who has a sense of social and humanistic responsibility, is attentive to all factors of human living. Mr. Neutra certainly is all of that. In fact, it seems more profitable to view his architecture than to follow his discussion of the architect's capacity to meet varied and subtle physiological and psychological problems to which all men are subjected.

Mr. Neutra writes that most of the work of the architect is "fraught with threat or promise, with harm or benefit, with future trouble or a comfortable, wholesome rolling on of many life processes and—if we look broadly at our harassed man-made world—with the *survival* of our race." True, perhaps, even if greatly exaggerated. In any case such concerns cannot be observed or even expected in the photographs.

The forty-eight examples of dwelling houses given in the volume are handsome in many ways. They are spacious, forthright, sensitive in proportion, often combined with a Japanese feeling, and the plans show good interpretations of modern spacial concepts. Mr. Neutra clearly utilizes expert engineering and building techniques and materials. All his houses are really similar and reflect a doctrinaire approach in architectural expression, which no doubt conform to his artistic conviction. They obtain beautiful effects through the use of large unencumbered rooms and spaces, effects which are not available in houses for low-income groups. Much of the simplicity of his architecture, its dignity and beauty result from the employment of high-quality building materials, which are rarely possible for large-scale housing.

It would be wonderful if Mr. Neutra's humanistic interests, his wide exercise of thought, and his noble conception of the architectural profession could be more fully utilized and applied in the most *important* problems of life and human habitat, *i.e.*, in regional and city planning, which include large-scale housing for middle- and lower-income groups. But despite these reservations his book is a valuable one. Architects will certainly want it in their libraries, and the general reader will appreciate a fine picture album whose effectiveness it is impossible to give through mere description.

The Enrichment of Buildings

"Art in European Architecture," by Paul Damaz *(Reinhold. 228 pp. $12.50), is a copiously illustrated study of the relationship of buildings to other art forms in the Old World. Our reviewer is Martin James of the design department of Brooklyn College.*

By Martin James

THE IDEA that architecture, painting, and sculpture should form one inseparable whole is one which, although not Le Corbusier's alone—its practice is age old—has been so ably preached and demonstrated by him that Paul Damaz has fittingly chosen it to preface his book "Art in European Architecture":

> Painters and sculptors live their own lives, and the architects are either utterly indifferent to this particular problem, or if they are not . . . they have other fish to fry than to hold meetings to find out who is to begin, the plastician or the architect, to decide the fate of works of art that (according to many plasticians) should "decorate" or, still more pretentiously, ennoble the building . . .

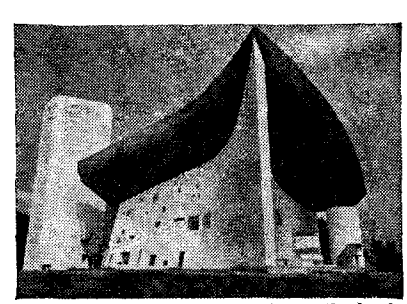
A glance at Greek or Egyptian temples, at Byzantine and medieval churches, at the civic and religious buildings of the Renaissance, shows that what we call "great" architecture is almost always architecture reinforced, articulated, and given richer meaning by what we have come condescendingly to call "decoration" or "ornament," as if we were talking of columns in front of a courthouse, a reproduction in a living room, or a rustic name plate on a suburban Cape-Codder. The Renaissance designers planned public squares and open spaces as totalities articulating *all* forms in scale, rhythm, color, and texture. If to the Piazza della Signoria or San Marco or San Pietro our children can only oppose Piccadilly Circus and Regent Street, Times Square or Columbus Circle, the reasons, as Mr. Damaz rehearses them, are familiar: industrial man's dichotomy between art and utility; the segregated training of artist, architect, and engineer; their alienation in turn from the public; the disappearance of educated patrons in favor of anonymous corporations directed by men of uncertain culture; and building for profit to the exclusion of pride. To be reborn modern art and architecture have had to cast off all superfluities, to seek neutral color and clear forms. Prefabrication, high wages, and industrialized building schedules do not lend themselves to the long slow one-man tinkering, to the basic inefficiency that attends the creation of a work of art, especially a *built-in* work of art.

Despite such discouragements as these, the pioneer modern architects and abstract artists, such as the "rational" Gropius, who brought Klee and Kandinsky to teach at the Bauhaus, the "ascetic" Mondrian, who saw home-street-and-city as intercommunicating space, color, and culture, or the De Stijl propagandist Van Doesburg, who labored to introduce color into architecture and civic design, had just such a totality at heart.

At what stage should architecture be married to art, and how? The authorities Mr. Damaz cites agree that the creators must be possessed of architectural vision. Architectural and other schools will have to revise their premises and turn out rounded human beings capable of dealing with all the arts in their most advanced form. Artists will have to think beyond the edges of the easel painting, for a mural is not just an enlarged easel painting. One wonders if the artists do not sense this. Are not many of today's abstract works themselves already big enough to envelop one, to "move around in" as in an architectural space; in fact are they not often suitable for the entire wall of a room?

New techniques have contributed to the emerging styles. Concrete, which, Mr. Damaz points out, is more widely used in Europe than here, has inherent sculptural and textural possibilities. These may arise directly from the

(*Continued on page* 26)



—*From the book.*

Le Corbusier-designed French church.

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FICTION

—Jacket design for "The Return of Lono."

"... the last tragic days of Captain James Cook."

Mankind in Animals

"The Stories of Liam O'Flaherty" *(Devin-Adair. 419 pp. $5), is a collection of forty-two short tales by the author of "The Informer."*

By John Cook Wyllie

LIAM O'FLAHERTY is an Irish wolf baying at the moon. He is humorless, passionate, without joy. In his stories there are no banshees, no pixies. All men are mortal, all men are animals. The forces of nature, indifferent to their inevitable triumphs, brood impartially over all his people.

There have been objections to his stories. It has been said, for example, that while it is all right for an author to see the animal nature of man, it is all wrong for O'Flaherty, as he does often in his new collection, "The Stories of Liam O'Flaherty," to see mankind in animals. This is a moral, not a literary, judgment and has the same kind of counterfeit ring as the rejection by a biologist of Audubon lithographs. O'Flaherty's animal stories (*e.g.*, of a water-hen mating, or of a cow bereft of her stillborn calf) are as fine as any animal stories in the language. The one about a hawk, for the inveterate searcher after non-existent symbols, is dangerously autobiographical on several different levels of ambiguity: O'Flaherty stands for a few moments over his kill, with his lewd purple tongue lolling from his open beak; later he struts back and forth among the disgorged pellets and the bloody remains of eaten prey.

But the majority of these are animal stories only because man is one of the animals. Men, not hawks, come in for the chief handsawing.

O'Flaherty's virile pessimism, his attraction to physical violence, and his ability to see the good weft among the threads of the evil warp of human nature, these things in O'Flaherty remind one of Faulkner. Just about there the resemblance ends. Both tell, without weeping over the spectacle, of the poor in spirit, of those who mourn, of the meek, of those who hunger and thirst. But the prose of the two men is yards apart. Faulkner's writing is like honeysuckle growing in rusted barbed wire. O'Flaherty's is burned clean, weedless, ready for the tobacco plant. His prose has the naked simplicity of D. H. Lawrence's and at the same time the weird and astringent grandeur of a symphonic movement of Sibelius.

Nearly everyone knows that one of the dozen great movies of the century is "The Informer." Some people know that O'Flaherty wrote the novel behind that movie. Those who read books know of other novels by O'Flaherty, but they also know that O'Flaherty's real genius shows itself most clearly in his short stories. In this company of readers this new gleaning from earlier collections and from recent writings will be welcomed.

Death of a God

"The Return of Lono," by O. A. Bushnell *(Little, Brown. 290 pp. $3.75), tells the tragic story of James Cook, who was received as a god in Hawaii early in 1779 and came to a miserable end not long after.*

By Robert Payne

THE SPATE of historical novels goes on, and what is so disturbing is that so few are historical at all. When Moses and Caesar talk with the accents of Madison Avenue, when historical characters are bent and twisted to conform to our own authentic mid-twentieth-century passions, there is room for belief that something has gone wrong with the whole process of transforming history into novels. "How strange," we say, reading the latest Shellabarger, "why, these people are exactly like us! They laugh at the same jokes, and have exactly the same attitude toward sex! They even have the same hair-dos!" Unfortunately, it is not so simple. It would seem that historic sense—the power to recapture the past—is given to few. But when a truly good historical novel comes to birth something of quite extraordinary value is accomplished. It is like a miracle. Fire flashes from heaven and all the barriers of space and time are shattered.

It is a strange business, and no one has yet gone to the heart of it. Flaubert succeeded in "Salammbô," so did Robert Graves in "I, Claudius" and Kenneth Roberts in "Rabble in Arms." More recently there was H. F. M. Prescott's "The Man on a Donkey." There are not so very many others. In all those books we are made aware of an authentic past presented to us by a process of transmutation. Every gesture, every action, and every thought belongs to its time, is of its time and of no other time. The splendor of the miracle when it occurs is something to wonder at.

I suspect that "The Return of Lono" belongs to the high tradition. It is a short work and cannot be compared in scope with any of the great historical novels, but it possesses a prodigious sense of authenticity. It is drenched in the flavors, the colors, and the atmosphere of a past which is all the more difficult to recapture because it is still close to us. It tells the story of the last tragic days of Captain James Cook, who reached the shores of Hawaii in the early months of 1779, to be greeted by the tribes as though he were a god, the most powerful and

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glorious of the gods, and then to die a few weeks later at the hands of Hawaiian spearmen in a miserable little skirmish on the seashore.

Captain Cook comes alive: generous, quick to anger, quick to cool, a born leader with a terrible consciousness of the price of leadership. William Bligh, short and dark, with a gift for mutinous conduct—he was to command the *Bounty* some years later—is depicted equally well. So is John Ledyard, the Corporal of Marines, a tall, stern New Englander with a puritan conscience, who did his best to corrode the springs of Cook's action. There is young John Forrest, midshipman, who has an idyllic love affair with the beautiful Hinahina, the daughter of Kailiki. There is Po'ou, the high priest, with his scaly skin derived from too much drinking of bitter awa root, a god-intoxicated old man with a cracked voice who totters with the fatigue of age. The characters stand out. The story moves toward its end with the inevitability of Greek tragedy. But what is remarkable in the telling of it is the authority of the author. As you read you find yourself saying: "This is how it happened—in this way and no other way." And if you want to know what it was like to come to the islands of the Pacific when they were still virgin it is all here. Affection, scholarship, a sense of color and life have combined to produce a miracle.

FRASER YOUNG'S LITERARY CRYPT NO. 679

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 679 will be found in the next issue.

XTF XTABH HFBFVOMME

VOAWFR LB QAXE

MOBR AW XOZFW.

—QTOVMFW YOVBFV.

Answer to Literary Crypt No. 678

A wise scepticism is the first attribute of a good critic.
—JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

Child of Evil

***"The Unquiet Spirit," by Marguerite Steen** (Doubleday. 253 pp. $3.75), is a tale of witchcraft and death in present-day England.*

By Harrison Smith

AFTER TWENTY-FIVE novels, including a highly successful trilogy dealing with a family of Bristol shipowners engaged in the African slave trade, Marguerite Steen has again demonstrated her versatility by producing a spine-chilling tale of witchcraft and death. "The Unquiet Spirit" has the advantage of being short enough to read at one sitting, preferably after dark in a lonely house in the country. The danger hovering over Arnold Lewes and his perverse and sadistic small son is the product of an ingenious mind as well as the physical manifestation of the supernatural. In an odd way it combines the eerie elements of Henry James's "Turn of the Screw" with its household of bedeviled children and William March's "The Bad Seed"; for what can be more horrendous than a child born to evil.

The novel begins when Lord Whittingham meets Arnold Lewes, his Oxford classmate, and accepts his invitation to stay at his house on the moors with his wife, her sister, and his strangely brilliant son. He had known that Arnold was an esoteric poet, perhaps a genius, and that he had not fulfilled his early promise. He soon discovered that he was a manic-depressive who had come to London to visit his psychiatrist. There were more startling discoveries when he reached Arnold's country house. Fabienne, his wife, and her sister Violet, were both in love with him, and Dominic, the pale elfin boy, was alarmingly intelligent and could not be controlled. He ran naked over the lawn, slept in strange hiding places; disturbed by a sick cat, he threw it into the furnace.

There were darker aspects of this strange family. In Arnold's room there was a crude but powerful seventeenth-century portrait of a woman with demon's eyes who had been hanged by the villagers for witchcraft. A stake had been driven through her heart; but before she could be buried her body was stolen. Years before Whittingham had been with Arnold when he had opened the grave and found it empty. The boy's favorite toy was a ouija-board. One day while Lord Whittingham watched the word that emerged was SEWEL. Then he drew

—*Madame Yevond.*

". . . darker aspects [of a] strange family."

the head of a woman in a few bold strokes. "It's Miss Sewell, the witch lady," Dominic said. The boy had deliberately reversed the letters of the witch's name.

As the story progresses the weird aspects of the household assume a bolder outline. By the time Miss Steen has set the stage for the last act, the final catastrophe, all the elements for the climax are present: The neurotic, ruined man, his involvement with two women who are sisters, the diabolic child, the last skeleton of the witch whose name the boy recalls out of nowhere fuse into one final act of violence, for the witch who had been deprived of her right to rest in her grave had finally found refuge in a human body.

Actually, the plot of the novel is based on the popular fiction of two centuries ago when the British public avidly read "Gothic" horror stories set in ancient houses on lonely moors or in ruined castles. A few months ago an enormously popular book was published based on the reincarnation of Bridie Murphy, who presumably lived a century ago. Thousands of contemporary Americans now believe that the dead can return to life. The readers of Miss Steen's hair-raising novel are entitled to ask why a more alarming incarnation of an evil woman cannot survive to entertain and terrify our midnight hours.

THE SEA-CHANGE OF MR. FALCONER: Expendable ships of war, like May-flies, go through months of preparation for a final metamorphosis, have a few hours of active life, and are then extinguished. Such ships are the tank landing craft that sail through Hugh Hickling's brief, salty novel entitled

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"Falconer's Voyage" (Houghton Mifflin, $3.50). Destined for an early-wave landing on the Normandy beachhead, these British craft, with their two officers and a handful of crewmen each, will completely justify their existences if they succeed in getting their tanks, tank crews, and ammunition ashore, and then clear out so that other LCTs may land. But the months of training for this brief task are a time in which the officers and crews must forget their uncertain futures and live for the moment.

Alex Falconer, tall, lean, bearded, with the air of an Elizabethan privateer about him, is an expert pursuer of this kind of life. As the novel begins he is presented at the height of careless enjoyment of a world in which he has ample scope for his skill as a seaman, a tosspot, and a lover. As captain of the LCT 0101, savoring every drop of the power and prestige of his job, he is ripe for the consequences of *hubris*. They come quickly when in an excess of careless dash he lets his tanks go ashore in water just a little too deep for them. Two tanks are lost, and two tank crews are instantly drowned, but Falconer dismisses the matter and returns to his mooring emotionally untouched. It was not *his* affair that an uncharted shoal kept him from getting close enough to the beach. Neither was it his affair that WREN Whitby, stationed on the naval base on the Firth of Clyde, had got careless enough to let Falconer leave her with child.

But as maneuvers and the approaching invasion take him physically farther away from these scrapes Falconer undergoes a sea-change; the voyage of the title is his soul's voyage to a safe harbor of altruism, which the young captain reaches, ironically enough, on the bloody sands of the Normandy beach. On his way he is assisted by his relations with another C.O., Kenwright, who is a decent, efficient bundle of domestic virtues, and by his friendship with the flotilla officer, a salty old fraud of a lieutenant commander who is nevertheless devoted to his job. There is a fine feeling in this book for shipboard life, for the details of seamanship, and for the way men in the service talk to each other. To these qualities Mr. Hickling adds a deft narrative touch that pulls the reader right up onto the beachhead aboard the LCT 0101.

—THOMAS E. COONEY.

JUNIOR'S DILEMMA: The hero of **"Time Was . . . ,"** by John Selby (Rinehart, $3.75), is a small-towner of the turn of the century named James Bryson Tremont, Jr., who works in his father's

(*Continued on page 26*)

AMERICANA

Mrs. Stowe's Shadow

***"Goodbye to Uncle Tom," by J. C. Furnas** (William Sloane Assoc. 435 pp. $6), is an inquiry into the myths that surround the American Negro. It is reviewed here by the Pulitzer Prize-winning biographer Professor Russel B. Nye of Michigan State University.*

By Russel B. Nye

UNDER the rather jaunty title "Goodbye to Uncle Tom" J. C. Furnas, one of the most successful free-lance journalists now practising, has undertaken a study of the myths that surround the American Negro, their roots, their growth, their acceptance and propagation. His aim is to clarify and reappraise the confused mass of preconception and plain nonsense that represents popular thinking about the Negro over the past century. In his attempt to do so Mr. Furnas has as much success as anyone can, considering the heritage of prejudice and opinion that has muddied thinking on the subject for a hundred years or more. If more people follow Mr. Furnas's attempt with the same honesty and sincerity he will have made a real contribution to the future of American society.

A major share of the responsibility for the Negro myths, thinks Mr. Furnas, must lie with Harriet Beecher Stowe. She may have been, as Lincoln is supposed to have said, "the little lady who wrote the book that made this great war," but she was also the little lady of good will who confused American thinking for a century. "Uncle Tom's Cabin," however well intentioned, crystallized current misconceptions of both the Negro and slavery and, by its incredible popularity, embedded them firmly into American thought. The picture of the Negro that it drew encompassed all the current stereotypes of the Negro, all the generalizations true neither then nor now, and it still has a powerful residual influence on twentieth-century attitudes.

Curiously enough, as the author points out, Mrs. Stowe, whose first-hand knowledge of slavery was sketchy, managed in attacking the system to give credence to the body of Southern proslavery and anti-Negro generalizations she hoped to destroy. A wonderful section in the "Tom show," the most fascinating result of Mrs. Stowe's labors, helps to explain the diffusion of her views and their general acceptance by a public that thought it was seeing truth. Uncle Tom, Simon Legree, and the bloodhounds have lived far too long, Mr. Furnas believes, and it is time they were decently interred. There may be room for some argument here, since there were other and perhaps equally powerful forces at work in propagating confusion and misconception, but nevertheless Mr. Furnas's reappraisal

—From "Goodbye to Uncle Tom."

"Eliza Crossing the Ice"—". . . Simon Legree and the bloodhounds have lived far too long."

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of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" and its influence is good sense. Even if the point is overemphasized Harriet has much to answer for.

With this as his central thesis, the author begins at the beginning by launching into an appraisal of slavery and the slave as they presumably were in fact. There were good masters and bad masters; there were kindly overseers and cruel ones. Some Negroes seemed contented with their lot, some were not. In the process of his analysis he scotches (one hopes for good) the myth of the "befo' de wah" Southern utopia nurtured by generations of misty-minded novelists. The legend of the magnolia-scented "big house" with its chivalric master and aristocratic mistress surrounded by happy darkies and tinkling banjos receives a thorough blasting. There is only one possible generalization that can emerge from his analysis and Mr. Furnas makes it clearly and unequivocally—that any system which arrogates to one group of men complete power over another is bad, and one well lost, however many problems its elimination may create. That it did create problems the author admits; that they are insoluble he does not.

The latter portion of the book examines the myth of the Negro in the light of contemporary knowledge and common sense. The caste system, the genetic fallacy, the racist theory, and all the rest of the welter of confused and misdirected generalizations that characterize current thinking are considered, dissected, and tested. Very little remains once the analysis is completed. For once and all, pleads Mr. Furnas, let us jettison the formulae inherited from the ante-bellum nineteenth century and live in the twentieth, facing our number one problem with rationality, common sense, and decency. It is time we did some straight thinking, in the author's opinion, and grew up.

Mr. Furnas writes with good humor, clearheaded common sense, and a lively though occasionally flippant wit. In a narrow sense of the word this is not a scholarly book. In the better sense of the word it is a popularized study intended for the general reader. Neither statement is meant to be derogatory. What the author does is mine the scholarship in history, anthropology, and sociology to extract, summarize, generalize, and produce a readable, intelligent synthesis of knowledge and opinion about the Negro. It is not "history made easy," but it is (to use a tired phrase) history made interesting and certainly made pertinent. This is not an easy accomplishment and Mr. Furnas does it well.

Teddy in the Wilds

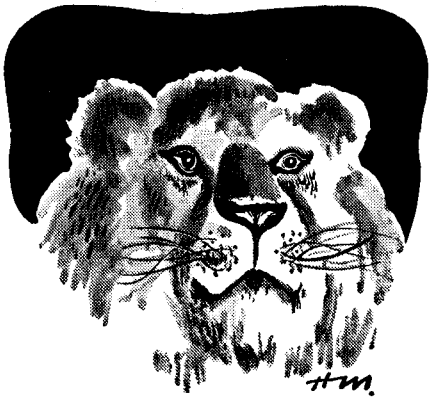
***"Theodore Roosevelt the Naturalist," by Paul Russell Cutright** (Harper. 297 pp. $4), is a study of the facet of the twenty-sixth President that led to what may have been his greatest contribution to the American people. Henry Beetle Hough, editor of* The Vineyard Gazette *of Edgartown, Mass., reviews it below.*

By Henry Beetle Hough

GIFFORD PINCHOT, who was one of Theodore Roosevelt's lieutenants, believed that his greatest work for the United States, "the great fact which will give his influence vitality and power long after we shall have gone to our reward . . . is the fact that he changed the attitude of the American people toward conserving the natural resources." This too is the view of major historians.

Paul Russell Cutright quotes Pinchot's words in "Theodore Roosevelt the Naturalist," a book which shows how Roosevelt's abundant vitality and outdoor interests matured and were shaped into the performance of his unique role. Dr. Cutright recounts in good, readable narrative all the interests and activities related to nature that were included in Roosevelt's life; much of the material, taken item by item, is casual or trifling—a boy collecting specimens, a man listening to birds as opportunity offered—but the whole view is of a lifelong orientation toward the natural world.

The lusty, boyish joy that Roosevelt took in the killing of wild animals separated him from the traditional school of naturalists who abhorred killing for sport. His first overt step in relation to natural resources was helping to found the Boone and Crockett Club in 1887, a group of affluent, blue-blooded hunters of big game who wished to see their pursuit safeguarded into future generations. Yet the club was influential in winning passage of the Park Protection Act and the Forest Reserve Act under which Roosevelt later on, as President, was first to add on a vast scale to the national reserves.



As a hunter Roosevelt possessed two attributes that were exceptional and admirable: first, his capacity for and zeal in observation were like a hunger never satisfied; second, his standards of sportsmanship were conspicuously high, inseparable from the romanticism of the hunt. In his dramatization of rough-and-ready qualities, his sometimes over-asserted virility, he established these attributes as belonging to wholesome Americanism.

It is curious to think of Theodore Roosevelt in a succession of naturalists that comes down through Gilbert White and Thoreau, yet his contribution was important in the same cause, and his leadership of action, especially at a time when the natural heritage hung in the balance, accomplished what no literary or scientific means could have been relied on to accomplish.

THE friendly respect in which eminent naturalists held Roosevelt is impressive. John Burroughs, Frank M. Chapman, William T. Hornaday, and others valued his attainments highly. "I have never been disturbed by the President's hunting trips. It is to such men as he that the big game legitimately belongs," said Burroughs, that disciple of Thoreau, and it could not have been friendship alone that persuaded Burroughs to this attitude.

Yet the attacks upon Roosevelt as a "game butcher" were many and continuing. Dr. Cutright seems content to have these attacks dismissed as "mendacious," although Roosevelt's own assaults upon "nature fakers" and upon Abbott H. Thayer for his views as to concealing coloration were merely overenthusiastic, even if sometimes mistaken. When Roosevelt wanted to shoot mountain lions in Yellowstone National Park it was "yellow journals" that blew up the proposal. Roosevelt was a fighter but he was also sensitive, and it seems a fair judgment that, "mendacious" or not, the published criticism was a factor in shaping his final and mature point of view.

Dr. Cutright succeeds in presenting a balanced and attractive portrait of a great naturalist, a lesser-known Roosevelt in a greater aspect. The book falls under the head of documentation rather than analysis, and should have lasting value in relation to the larger story of American natural resources and conservation.

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The Real Abe

***"Lincoln Reconsidered," by David Donald** (Alfred A. Knopf. 200 pp. $3), offers nine essays that compare the Lincoln of legend and the Lincoln of history. Professor David M. Potter, Yale authority on the Civil War period, reviews it below.*

By David M. Potter

THIRTY years ago when Carl Sandburg published "Abraham Lincoln: The Prairie Years" Henry L. Mencken, in an enthusiastic review, asked: "Is the narrative satisfactory to the professors of Lincolology? To hell with the professors of Lincolology."

David Donald is not exactly a professor of Lincolology—certainly no such pedant as Mencken had in mind. But his new book, "Lincoln Reconsidered" (which Mencken should have liked), raises precisely the question which Mencken's imprecation suggested: What will happen if the irresistible force of historical truth about Lincoln meets with that immovable object, the popular image of the Railsplitter and Emancipator.

Ninety years after Lincoln's death the volume of literature about him and the detail with which the minutiae of his life have been examined far exceed the attention that has been accorded to any other American. Donald's book poses the obvious, and at the same time startling, question: How much do we really understand of what we know about Lincoln? In a book whose dimensions are singularly modest for this branch of literature nine essays are devoted to elaborating a genuinely brilliant answer to the question.

The concept of a "mythical" Lincoln versus a "realistic" Lincoln has long been recognized, but in an over-simple form it has perhaps done more to retard than to advance understanding. For, as Mr. Donald shows, there are really two myths: the political myth of the demigod, the patron saint, the Emancipator, infinitely perfect; and the folklore myth of the legendary frontier hero, the yarn-spinning, Crockett-like Railsplitter and Prairie Lawyer, by no means a plaster saint, but infinitely lovable.

The folklore myth by emphasizing Lincoln's more homely and human attributes has borne a superficial resemblance to realism and, therefore, has masqueraded as the "realistic" Lincoln. This illusion has in turn produced a running battle between the two myths in which true realism was not even a contestant, much less a winner. Consequently the American people have seen relatively little of that Lincoln of everyday life who won his right to be a statesman by first being "an astute and dextrous operator of the political machine"; who proceeded to the goals of idealism by a "frank pragmatism—some might call it opportunism"—which drove the doctrinaires into blind fury; who combined the humility of complete absence of *amour propre* with a self-assurance which enabled him to bend all the party bigwigs to his purposes. In an anecdote about his wrestling Lincoln once remarked: "For such an awkward fellow, I am pretty sure-footed. It used to take a pretty dextrous man to throw me." After his re-election in 1864 there were a number of once-formidable but now-impotent political adversaries who might have pondered this statement about the awkward fellow whom, four years previously, they had patronized and planned to manage.

A recognition of Lincoln in realistic terms is desirable not only because there is some merit in truth for its own sake, but also because the Lincoln of actuality is a more impressive man and a more luminous example of democracy at work than any of the myth-figures. Further, the axioms of myth have corollaries that distort history. For instance, if it is axiomatic that Lincoln was a demigod, then opposition to him can no longer be regarded as ordinary political criticism—part of the democratic process—but assumes the quality of sacrilege, and all critics become evil men. Mr. Donald shows very effectively how the unrealistic stereotype of Lincoln has thus induced a corresponding stereotype of the Radicals, and though he cannot wash them clean of a certain offensive self-righteousness he distinctly presents them in a new light.

IT IS A pity that in American history, where idealism and lofty purpose have succeeded only when they were linked with patience, moderation, compromise, accommodation, and adjustment, we minimize the importance of these latter qualities in our national heroes. A misguided sense of patriotism edits out the very pragmatic traits that have made for greatness in most American leaders, and it depicts our statesmen as inflexible copybook idealists of a kind who could never have succeeded

"The voters will pay for this. I'm going back on relief."

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in a real democratic situation. It represents the one-track support of some single transcendent value as the task of statesmanship, whereas almost invariably the real task has been the skilful reconciliation of conflicting values. It is ironical that Lincoln, the supreme reconciler of conflicting values, should be stereotyped as the supreme protagonist of a single one.

Mr. Donald's book is a powerful and effective antidote for this stereotyped view. But, as he would be the first to agree, the American imagination clings tenaciously to its myths of the Frontier Hero, the Man of Sorrows, and the predestined Emancipator. Diligent research and palpable truth face heavy odds when they encroach upon the will to believe. Even the ablest professor of Lincolology, when he performs the public service of challenging this will, must be prepared to incur the verdict pronounced by Mr. Mencken.

GOLD PENINSULA: For a quick summary of the history of America's Gold Peninsula Prof. Rembert W. Patrick's **"Florida Under Five Flags"** (University of Florida Press, $3) is hard to beat. The book, which is a revised edition of the one issued in 1945, the centenary of Florida's admission to the Union, is a lavish, slick-paper production; it is crammed with illustrations and has five pretty good maps. Florida's five flags are, of course, those of Spain, France, Great Britain, the Confederacy, and the United States. The Confederate flag, until recently at least, appears to be the one of which Floridians are most proud, and this is reflected in both Professor Patrick's text and in the illustrations. He is, however, at pains to point out the lopsidedness of the ante-bellum social and economic structure, and he does pay passing tribute to the state's Reconstruction Constitution. The prejudices of a bygone age die slowly, and in the case of Florida dramatic changes since World War II have hastened the process. Chief among these changes are population growth, urbanization, the millions in income from commercial crops and big strides in industry. Professor Patrick deals extensively with this emergence of a "new" Florida, and is not unmindful of the problems it creates. Summary, not speculation, however, is the theme of this book, and it must be said that Professor Patrick has bound up a lot of history into a very tidy and readable package. —ALDEN WHITMAN.

G. W. IN THE WEST: Contemporary accounts of historical incidents garnished with knowledgeable editing are delights both to the casual reader and the professional historian. Such a delight has been served up by Hugh Cleland in **"George Washingon in the Ohio Valley"** (University of Pittsburgh Press, $5). Mr. Cleland has bound together the basic documents pertaining to the seven phases of Washington's career that touched on the Western Country. Five of the trips dealt with military matters and two were on Washington's and others' land interests. What impresses the modern

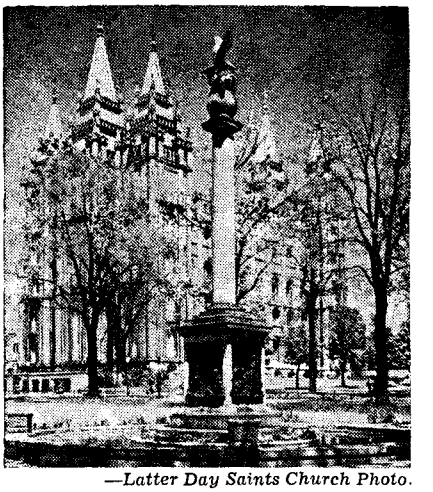
(*Continued on page 29*)

AMERICA WITHOUT BRAG: With its more than 300 pictures and 50,000 words, Emerson M. Brooks's **"The Growth of a Nation"** (Dutton, $5.95) is a capable and comprehensive once-over-lightly survey of America from the dinosaur to the Geiger counter. It differs principally from most of its predecessors in a heavily-populated field by accenting social history and social progress—labor and education, for instance, —each get much more space than the Civil War. The jacket declares that this is not a "brag book," and the description is accurate; Mr. Brooks points with pride, but he does not beat a drum. This is an ideal book to send to a friend abroad, and your next-door neighbor will be a better citizen for looking it over. So will you. The illustrations are well chosen and show a pleasant variety of method: photographs (including several excellent period shots), old prints, maps, cartoons, advertisements, title-pages.

One criticism can be leveled at "The Growth of a Nation" which applies to many picture-text books: Why cannot every photograph and print be fully described, located, and, if possible, dated, not necessarily in the descriptive text, but in a back-of-the-book summary? Mr. Brooks's failure to render this service is even exemplified in his text; his next-to-the-last picture is a photograph of the home in which the Eisenhower boys grew up, which is, one learns, "west of the Missouri River." Takes in quite a bit of territory. —JOHN T. WINTERICH.

—National Archives.

The Landing of Columbus.



—Latter Day Saints Church Photo.

Mormon Temple, Salt Lake City.

—Henry Ford Museum, Dearborn, Mich.

Henry Ford in His First Automobile, 1896.

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Ways to Understand Literary Greatness

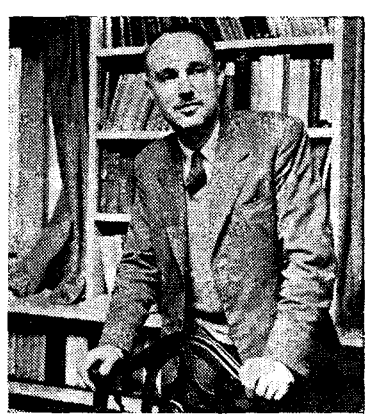
"Critical Approaches to Literature," by David Daiches *(Prentice-Hall. 404 pp. $6.50), is a well-known critic's examination of the chief contributions to literary theory in the classical and English languages. Joseph Wood Krutch, author of "The Modern Temper," reviews it below.*

By Joseph Wood Krutch

SOME of us are old enough to remember when the "New Criticism" meant Croce's literature-as-expression and when "the adventure of the soul among the masterpieces" was a respectable phrase. Since then a generation has grown up taking it for granted that "serious criticism" was invented by Pound and Eliot, and some members of it are going to be shocked to discover that David Daiches (whom they have already recognized as a "serious critic") has surveyed the whole field in a book called "Critical Approaches to Literature" and has come up with the conclusion that there is much to be said on both sides. Or, as he puts it: "There is no single 'right' method of handling literary problems, no single approach to works of literary art that will yield all the significant truths about them." Even to impressionism he grants a useful function and he is guilty also of a heresy which may seem even blacker to an age which regards criticism as the Queen of the Arts and Sciences and sometimes seems to assume that the function of poetry is to provide material for the critic. "Art is greater than its interpreters . . . ," he writes. "While the scrutinizing of literary theories is a valuable philosophical activity . . . the active appreciation of literature is not always dependent on such theorizing.

"Critical Approaches to Literature" is a long solid book into which a great deal of labor and thought has obviously gone. While disclaiming completeness of any kind, it undertakes a careful examination of what the author regards as the fundamental contributions to literary theory in the classical and English languages, from Plato to Longinus and from Sidney to the youngest of the present generation. Students of literary esthetics and the history of ideas may well find the most valuable (as it is the longest) portion of the study that in which the author traces through excerpts from key thinkers the modifications and enrichments of content in their attempts to deal with such recurring problems as the meaning of "imitation," the social, moral, and psychological function of literature, and the special kind of "truth" it sets forth. Mr. Daiches's statements of the problems and, especially, his analysis of the elusive differences between successive critics who often changed and deepened the concepts which they seemed to be borrowing from their predecessors, seems to me remarkably fresh and penetrating despite the fact that he is dealing with persons and ideas which have been dealt with so that they have become smoothly conventionalized. For all this, it may still be true that the most important aspect of his book and the one most likely to have a definite influence is that which involves his repudiation of that tendency to claim that they have discovered the one and only true way, into which some of the New Critics have tended to fall.

HE DOES not deny or even discount the genuineness of their contribution. Perhaps they only have, in our time, said new and true things about literature. Mr. Daiches discusses appreciatively their contributions and their timeliness at a moment when more traditional methods seem to have lost temporarily their ability to add anything to what they had already achieved. But he also points out very clearly and shrewdly the limitations of the method—especially the fact that since it works best with certain kinds of literature, notably metaphysical poetry and symbolic prose fiction, it tends to conclude that therefore only the kind of poetry and the kind of fiction it can illuminate has a right to be called true fiction or true poetry. What is perhaps even more important, he protests against the blindness of those who refuse to admit that other methods can produce certain valuable results which their methods cannot. At one point in his favorable discussion of the achievements of the New Critics he remarks that a critic "who wishes to explain 'The Waste-land' to readers brought up on Palgrave's 'Golden Treasury' " will have to use the New Critic's methods. He might have added that nowadays the problem is more likely to be how to explain "The Golden Treasury" to readers brought up on "The Waste-land" and that for this task other methods are necessary.



—*Erich Hartmann.*

David Daiches—"fresh and penetrating."

In his autobiography Yeats announces that the intellectual life begins for us when we say "Thou fool!" —though he fails to add that according to the Bible this must mean that an intellectual life puts us in danger of hell-fire. His dictum was accepted by many New Critics as a working principle and it may even be that for a time it was an effective one. When Eliot wanted to protest that the romantic stress on the personality of the poet and on the abandonment to emotion had been somewhat overdone he would not have got as much attention by saying just that as he did get by pontificating: "Poetry is not a turning loose of emotion, but an escape from emotion; it is not the expression of personality, but an escape from personality." His maddening dogmatism was effective just because it was maddening and he often ended by persuading those whom he provoked into arguing with him.

But the New Critics are no longer voices crying in the wilderness. They purvey the current orthodoxy and they no longer need to overstate their case or to claim to have said the last word. The time has come when their method and their aspect of the truth should be put in perspective and given its place in the continuing but endless attempt to understand literary greatness. Mr. Daiches's book implies a plea for just that.

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James Joyce's Home Town . . .

"Dublin's Joyce," by Hugh Kenner *(Indiana University Press. 372 pp. $5.75), is a study of the city that shaped the great writer and about which he wrote so much. Mary M. Colum, Dublin native and frequent writer on its literature, reviews it below.*

By Mary M. Colum

HUGH KENNER in his book "Dublin's Joyce" takes on too much and accomplishes too little. What he wants to impress on us, first of all, is something that was obvious to readers of Joyce from the beginning—that he was "a writer with a subject and that subject was the state of his native Dublin." It might be added that he had a related subject: himself; he never wrote about anything else except himself and Dublin. Mr. Kenner assures us that Dublin represents the unique case of a European metropolis that had never undergone a romantic movement. Without having much sympathy with the labels "romantic" and "classical," I would say that Ireland did not need a romantic movement. It was already romantic; it had a romantic lyrical poetry in Irish and romantic politics to which the poets attached themselves.

It should be remarked that Ireland is a very difficult country for outsiders to understand, and of all the Irish writers James Joyce is beyond a doubt the most difficult for an outsider because of the multiplicity of obscure influences, historical and otherwise, that formed his mind.

"Dublin's Joyce," the product apparently of an earnest young professor, has, one would say, obviously been tackled according to the accepted procedure for such books: The aspiring author, without any real affinity with the country and mistaking an acquaintance with a miscellaneous number of authors from whom he scatters unrelated quotations through his pages for a familiarity with literature, descends upon Dublin, wears out a lot of shoeleather visiting all the streets and public-houses mentioned in "Ulysses," and finally arrives at some wrong-headed conclusions which he proceeds to reduce to writing.

He boldly plunges into an interpretation of Dublin—a dead city, a ghost. The dead city is preserved in language, he thinks, and it is language that maintains the city in deadness. The city may have been and is still somewhat paralyzed, as was the whole country, on account of the long English occupation and exploitation—dead it never was. For a period, from Joyce's student days and later, it was regarded by accomplished European judges as one of Europe's real intellectual centers; that was during the activity of Yeats, Synge, George Moore, the Gaelic League movement, and the first writers for the Abbey Theatre. Mr. Kenner does not seem to realize that the language spoken in the city, as everywhere in the country, is an English molded and twisted to express the Irish mind and with a construction partly derived from the Gaelic.

All the foreign writers on Joyce have fallen down in dealing with his education. His was the usual education for the middle classes in Ireland at the time. Without a real evaluation of Joyce's education it is difficult to understand his books with the odd learning that permeates them. Here is where the writer of "Dublin's Joyce" definitely goes wrong. The Jesuit schools, where Joyce was educated, were, he says, medieval survivals. Here one has to ask: What had the Jesuits to do with medievalism? They are not a medieval order like the Franciscans, the Dominicans, the Augustinians; they are post-Reformation and are generally considered an order founded to meet modern problems.

Joyce's studies were not dictated by some peculiar Jesuit discipline; they were dictated by a British Government authority called the Intermediate Education Board for Ireland, and all the schools, Protestant as well as Catholic, had the same curriculum and passed or failed, as the case may be, the same examinations. The present reviewer some years later was educated precisely the same way as James Joyce, for the curriculum did not change until after the British authority had ended, and the change in education in some facets can hardly be said to be for the better. As for University College, which Joyce attended when he finished the Intermediate, it was the survival of Cardinal Newman's Catholic University, which after Joyce's time became a constituent college of the new National University. Be it further noted that the head of University College was not a Jesuit though some of the teachers were. Its curriculum was dictated by another British authority, an examining body called the Royal University.

The author of "Dublin's Joyce" is astounded at the odd learning exhibited by the bar habitués in "Ulysses," since Lenehan recalling the way Pyrrhus died and MacHugh mentioning the Athenian fleets at Aegospotami strike no one as being out of context. He imagines that this learning is a hang-over from the eighteenth century. It was nothing of the sort; it was the very center of secondary and higher education of the time and probably was not very much different in certain other countries of Europe. Practically everyone who went through the Intermediate, not to speak of the University, knew Latin or Latin and Greek and a couple of modern languages.

Among the many bewildering things in "Dublin's Joyce" not the least are the far-fetched comparisons. There is a comparison between "Ulysses" and "The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes" that I cannot make head or tail of. The vocabulary freely employed staggers me. Here is a sample:

> Joyce's syncretic technique of characterization depends on this sort of rapid surveying of allotropic forms of the same personality, a method peculiarly adapted to the rendering of a society marked by a metamorphic personae.

As Molly Bloom said about similar jawbreakers, "Oh rocks!"

—*Courtesy of the National Gallery of Ireland.*

Joyce—"a writer with a subject . . .

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. . . and His Work

"Joyce the Man, the Work, the Reputation," by Marvin Magalaner and Richard M. Kain *(New York University Press. 377 pp. $5.00), is a comprehensive historical survey from "Dubliners" to "Finnegans Wake." David Daiches, University lecturer in literature at Cambridge University, reviews it below.*

By David Daiches

THERE comes a stage in the reputation of any major writer when it seems important to discuss not so much his work as the views of his work held by different generations of his critics and the variety of ways in which he has been approached and interpreted. We have already had an anthology of Joyce criticism; now Marvin Magalaner and Richard M. Kain give us in "Joyce the Man, the Work, the Reputation" a comprehensive historical survey of the assessments and interpretations of Joyce's work from "Dubliners" to "Finnegans Wake." The book is, however, more than an annotated history of critical thought about Joyce; it is also an attempt to project a full-length portrait of the man and his achievement. The authors apparently feel that what critics have said about Joyce in the past forty-odd years now constitutes a significant part of the critical and intellectual history of the twentieth century. At the same time they believe that much of this body of critical thought helps to illuminate and interpret Joyce as well as to illustrate the mind of the time.

Is this book, then, primarily a history of what people have said about Joyce or primarily an attempt to explain and illuminate Joyce with the help of whatever previous critics have said? I doubt if the authors ever asked themselves this question. They move deftly enough between the citation of others' views and the presentation of their own, making it clear as a rule when they are citing something merely for its historical value (some of the early attacks on "Ulysses," for example) and when they are presenting a view of Joyce or one of his works which they consider to be helpful in our present understanding and appreciation of him. Nevertheless, in reading this well-informed, perceptive, and enormously helpful book I was again and again struck by the apparently quite unsystematic way in which the authors would every now and again hold up their historical survey to endorse some particular opinion and supplement it with their own. True, a composite picture of the nature and value of Joyce's work does emerge from these pages; but it does not emerge as clearly as one had hoped and expected.

Perhaps it is unrealistic to wish that the authors had addressed themselves more single-mindedly to answering as comprehensively and richly as possible the question: How good are Joyce's literary works and why? They show a very proper awareness of the enormous complexities of those works and an engaging appreciation of the limits of any single critical approach. They welcome with genial eclecticism any way of looking at Joyce that promises to yield some valid new information or understanding. They are aware, too, that understanding Joyce the man is not the same thing as understanding and appreciating the works of Joyce the artist. But they do not take the trouble to sort out clearly the different things they are doing. The chapter on "Dubliners" begins as though it is going to be a reasoned account of its reception and reputation, but soon turns into an endorsement and illustration of Magalaner's own view of the symbolic element in the stories. The chapters on "Ulysses," on the other hand, are much more in the nature of a chronological account of critical views of the book. We await the summing up, the drawing together of the threads, the final statement about what, in the light of all this discussion, can now be said about the nature and value of the work; but it never comes. Or it might be truer to say that it comes in bits and pieces, the authors pausing to agree with or elaborate a point made by one of the critics they are presenting. The same can be said of the chapter on "Finnegans Wake."

THE book reads as though it were written at different times in independent sections. There is some repetition. The tone varies from that appropriate to a thesis or an article in *PMLA* to that suggestive of a little review. Yet —surprisingly, perhaps—the book engages the interest continuously; it is packed with helpful information and speculation and does succeed in presenting the challenge, the complexities, the paradoxes, and the enormous fascination of Joyce's work. To anyone who has read Joyce and has fallen under his spell this well-documented account of what his works have been said and can be said to mean is full of interest and stimulation. The title of this book suggests that its purpose is to answer the fundamental questions about Joyce; in fact, however, its function is to pose them. I am far from objecting to this, for I believe that the most important part of the function of the critic and explicator is to ask the right questions; it is for the reader to frame his own answers in the light of all the relevant considerations. And Messrs. Magalaner and Kain do give us most of the relevant considerations.

—Irish Tourist Bureau.

. . . and that subject was the state of his native Dublin."

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After Geneva

LAST September following my return from the Geneva Conference I reported to *SR* readers that a number of us had had the opportunity of discussing scientific matters of mutual interest with Soviet scientists and that we had parted company with the intent of maintaining some communication. Naturally, whether or not such intent could be fulfilled depended strongly upon the political relationship between our two nations.

Ten months have now elapsed since Geneva. I can report that relationships between American and Soviet scientists have continued on a very cordial basis. There has been considerable correspondence. Several American scientists have visited the Soviet Union. Three Soviet scientists participated in a symposium on "High Energy Physics" which was held at the University of Rochester. More recently a large group of American physicists has just returned from the Soviet Union, where they attended a similar conference in Moscow. The Atomic Energy Commission announced that it had no objections to the meeting, which was devoted entirely to unclassified subjects.

Another significant development has been the resumption by the Russians of publishing English abstracts of Russian articles in their scientific journals. The Russians maintained this policy for many years and then dropped it early in the days of the Cold War. The major result of this was the almost total neglect by American scientists of Soviet scientific developments. Few American scientists are able to read Russian, and other general efforts to keep our scientists informed of Soviet scientific developments were not very effective. Indeed, one of the most interesting aspects of the Geneva Conference was the emergence of the realization that the Soviet scientists were far better versed in American scientific developments than we were in theirs. But now the Russians are bringing back the English abstract—indeed an event of extraordinary significance.

My own relationship with Soviet scientists since Geneva has been both interesting and extremely fruitful. One of my Geneva acquaintances, whose field (like mine) is geochemistry, gave me copies of a number of his publications and I reciprocated. About a month after Geneva I received a letter from the Secretary of the Committee on Meteorites of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR suggesting that in view of the fact that we have similar research interests we should correspond. I agreed and to date we have sent each other a number of publications. A third Soviet scientist, also interested in meteorites, wrote to me a few weeks later with the same end in mind.

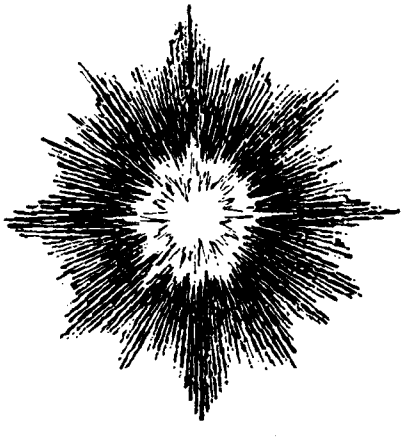
This relationship with my Soviet colleagues has thus far been marred on only one occasion by the interference of the U.S. postal authorities. All of the letters and packages which I have received from the Soviet Union have been addressed both in Russian and in English. Apparently two rather sizable packages of scientific publications were addressed to me only in Russian. These were returned to the sender by the postal authorities in New York marked "insufficient address." I received a note from the sender, who was understandably somewhat irritated, informing me that he received mail from all parts of the world addressed in numerous languages and in many alphabets. His mail was always delivered. Nevertheless, in spite of his irritation he was kind enough to readdress the packages in English and mail them once again.

In one of my letters to the Secretary of the Committee on Meteorites I mentioned that I was interested in what I had read about the famous Sikhote-Alin meteorite which fell in Siberia in 1946. This is one of the few and by far the largest of the iron meteorites that have been seen to fall and because of this it is a particularly interesting object for study. In my letter I mentioned that I would be very much interested in seeing and studying this remarkable meteorite.

A few weeks later I received a letter which contained the surprising information that the Committee on Meteorites had voted to present me with a specimen of the meteorite weighing nearly two pounds. The notification was accompanied by a reproduction of a water-color painting showing an artist's conception of the meteorite flying over Siberian housetops.

The meteorite specimen arrived a few days ago and it is truly a beautiful object. The only stipulation which was placed upon the gift was that the donors would appreciate our making available for publication in a Soviet scientific journal any scientific results which we obtain on the meteorite, in addition to a Western journal of our choosing.

How much longer will these cordial relationships last? They have already lasted longer than any of us had reason to believe might be possible almost a year ago. Discussions of meteorites and high-energy physics cannot resolve political differences between nations. But they can lead to understanding between individual human beings. And this has an importance of its own. —H. B.



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

GREAT RUSSIA

IN "REPORT ON THE MAJORITY" [*SR* May 19] Dr. Grayson Kirk writes: ". . . and our second preference would be for a Russia restricted to her pre-Communist frontiers." The European frontiers of pre-Communist Russia—that is, of Tsarist and even Kerensky Russia (apart from territorial losses to the German and Austrian armies)—included Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Bessarabia, and the major part of Poland, Warsaw included. Surely Dr. Kirk did not have in mind the restoration of all these pre-Communist Russian frontiers?

STOYAN PRIBICHEVICH.

Flushing, N.Y.

WHOLE PICTURE

I READ "Can Johnny's Parents Read?" [*SR* June 2] with considerable concern. Certainly we in the field are not above reproach, but let's look at the total picture before we condemn, as Gordon Dupee does, "so-called adult education." In New York State last year civic education for adults enjoyed the largest enrolment of all activities in the public-school programs. Countless numbers of parent-education groups, forum-discussion groups, groups concerned with problems of youth and aging are being conducted in the adult-education programs of the public schools. These patterns are duplicated by church activities, "Y" programs, university extension programs, and others in every corner of the country.

JOHN H. BIGGER,
Assistant Executive Secretary,
National Association of
Public School Adult Educators.

Washington, D. C.

NO UNLITERATE LITERATE

WHY DEVOTE space to an article such as Dupee's. I'm sure that every *SR* subscriber who read the article nodded his head, saying "Yes, yes, how true." What good does such a piece do in *SR*, journal of the literate? Why not publish it, or try to get it published, in a periodical appealing to the non-reader. Perhaps, to seduce same, it might be documented by a picture-story—pictures of an executive gleaning an office memo or a housewife grazing in Spillane. At least the article would then be directed to an audience which might profit from it.

HOMER HARTZLER.

Urbana, Ill.

STANDING THIRTEEN

IT HAS LONG BEEN my opinion that the present trend towards anti-intellectualism not only endangers the literacy rate of the next generation, but in a way defeats the whole purpose of progress. With its usual ironic perversity, the United States strives for higher quality of reading matter, free integrated education, and development of the higher thinking powers, so that as soon as it has these within its grasp it laughs in their faces, so to speak. The dislike of the superior and the desire to "fit in" have combined to make reading books as great a crime as not owning a television set.

Until the day when engaging in intellectual pursuits such as reading becomes a thing to be desired by the average American the future rests in the hands of the uneducated public. This is not a fact to be taken sitting down.

BARBARBA GERSON,
an aroused thirteen-year old.

New York, N. Y.

THROUGH HISTORY WITH J. WESLEY SMITH

"You and your crazy ideas about the world being round!"

BOOKS AND BUSINESS

RONALD MANSBRIDGE [*SR* June 2] may know the publishing business but he could use a few pointers on modern library administration. Why shouldn't libraries be able to purchase books at a good discount, just as the city buys garbage trucks at a good discount? And other factors weigh against the local bookstore as the supplier:

1. Publisher's bindings on most juvenile books will not stand up. It is most economical for libraries to purchase juveniles from a pre-bind jobber.

2. A library buys hundreds of titles which circulate but for which the average bookstore has so little demand that the owner seldom if ever stocks them.

3. Some types of books are purchased almost solely by libraries. Were it not for library sales many books of poetry, science, business, and reference would never be published. If the bookstore doesn't stock them why buy through the bookstore?

4. Modern libraries want their books on time. We like to receive them a week or two in advance of publication so as to catalogue them and get them out on the shelves by P-Day. To work through a bookstore, which in turn must work through a jobber (in all probability the same one we might use directly), then pack and repack, check and recheck, just isn't good sense. And we wouldn't like all that handling and paperwork.

JOHN R. BANISTER,
director of libraries,
W. C. Bradley Memorial Library.

Columbus, Ga.

FIGHTING FAMILY

HOLLIS ALPERT writes in his review of "Catered Affair" [*SR* June 2] that he finds no "moment of illumination" in the film. But I think Chayefsky is talking with great feeling about people who love each other deeply but who are inarticulate because they are tired and frustrated. Their love is latent; it shows itself in deeds, not words. The mother sacrifices herself and her chances for a better life so that her daughter may have a grand wedding. The father is more cautious, and the daughter tries to slow down the whole extravagant show. So what if these people express their intense family affection in scoldings and quarrels?

WILLIAM M. BLATT.

Boston, Mass.

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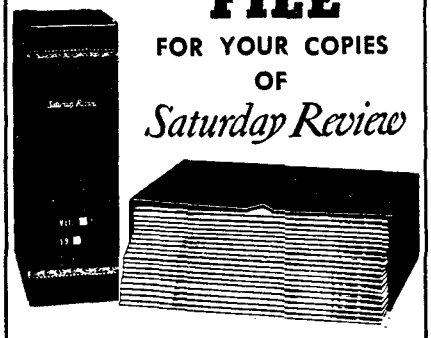

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6-30

BROADWAY POSTSCRIPT

Scenery, Scenery Everywhere . . .

THIS IS Peter Larkin week on Broadway. In two successive nights the talented young scene-designer appears to have cooked up more scenery than have his combined confrères in a full season. For **"Shangri-La,"** the musical version of James Hilton's "Lost Horizons," he has devised craggy passes that slide together, translucent mountain backdrops, raked stages that glow from underneath, filmy silks that float down from above in Chinese theatre style, and swinging architecture that must withstand the description, "This makes the Taj Mahal look like a bus stop."

For all of Mr. Larkin's admirable boldness and artistry, one wonders if the conception of "Shangri-La" as a spectacular illustration of the Hilton novel is not perhaps inimical to the material. As adapted by Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee, authors of "Inherit the Wind," the physical demonstration of halcyon serenity away from a world in which most of us "work ten hours a day to be a failure" is itself a failure that increases with effort used.

While "Shangri-La" calls itself a musical play, it is at its best when it is behaving as a musical comedy. The high point of the show comes when Alice Ghostley, as "one of the American Bible Belt's unwrapped gifts to China," is torn between her moral shibboleths and her newly-released libido. As she sings "I'm just a little bit confused" Miss Ghostley flounces masterfully through the quick but deep transitions in the manner that has established her as one of the brightest stars in the American musical theatre. Composer Harry Warren has also provided music for some spirited musical-comedy dancing by Harold Lang and Joan Holloway. And the show's catchiest tune, "We've decided to stay," reminds us that musical comedies make mighty fine entertainment when they use popular tunes to advance their story.

But the rest of "Shangri-La" is static in its composition. The principal love affair seems completely nominal as Jack Cassidy and the exquisite Shirley Yamaguchi merely state their love problems rather than experience them. Dennis King's wry urbanity is helpful, but it bogs down in narrative rather than coming fully to life in response to other characters. Albert Marre, who took over as director in midstream, appears at least to have made a tasteful and intelligible show out of "Shangri-La." But for the most part he has been unable to alchemize into silk a Tibetan kimono that has been mistakenly constructed out of wood.

MR. LARKIN'S second venture is **"New Faces of 1956,"** where within a simple unit setting he manages to present an elaborate series of scenic devices that challenges the supremacy of the Folies-Bergère. Traveling curtain rods fly boldly together. Perspective tableaus come amusingly to life. Scenery is constantly being lowered, raised, or torn into pieces. And almost everything works when you pull the string. With just the scenery constituting a show in itself, the producer has obligingly thrown in thirty-six revue numbers ruthlessly following one another. In such an atmosphere there is little time for enchantment, and the normal punctuation that one gets in good revue sketches seems deliberately to have been left out. No sketch or number goes much beyond the first impact of its basic idea.

In general the basically mediocre material is given handsome performances by the nineteen newcomers. There is T. C. Jones, whose adroit female impersonations are somehow not attended by the disagreeable flavor one often finds in such exhibitions. Jane Connell is a talented comedienne whose "April in Fairbanks" parody carries just the right note of satire and credibility. Johnny Haymer cuts a nicely bizarre figure in his takeoff on Ben Gazzara in "A Canful of Trash." Maggie Smith has been given the two funniest moments in the revue and makes the most of each. When her lover says "To hell with cricket" her carefully British response is, "Anyone who would say that would strike the Queen." And her Follies showgirl struggling to climb poisedly down a steep flight of stairs against the imbalancing force of ten dozen navel oranges hung from protruding hip-poles convulses the house. Billy Hayes as a zany soubrette, Virginia Martin as a voluptuous dish with a sense of humor, Tiger Haynes as a blissful primitive, and Suzanne Bernard as an attractive gamin are all pleasant talents whom we would like to meet again in more relaxed and distinguished circumstances.

—HENRY HEWES.

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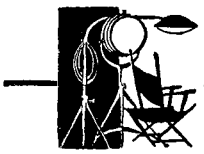

Italian Realism Refreshed

IT HAS often seemed during the past few years that the Italian film makers have reached both an artistic *impasse* and a philosophical dead end. "Umberto D.," which Vittorio De Sica made in 1952, appeared to be the last stop on the neo-realist line. From the breadth of vision, the lifelike mingling of tragedy and humor, the urge to put on the screen an uncompromising image of "the way things are" (to use the neo-realists' favorite phrase) the Italian film had degenerated into a sleazy succession of exploitation pictures featuring well-endowed damsels in situations that permitted them to display as much of their endowment as the producers thought they could get away with. There was still lip-service to realism, if realism can be defined simply in terms of natural backgrounds and the seamiest side of life—drugs, perversion, adultery, and prostitution. But the high ideals of the neo-realist movement, using the film to create a greater understanding among people in the building of a better world—these had all but disappeared.

"La Strada" (Trans-Lux) is the first film in a long time to suggest that they have not disappeared completely. This moving and compassionate work, written and directed by Federico Fellini, is neo-realism on a new plane. Where Rossellini and De Sica recalled the documentary film in creating a precise and unadorned picture of society Fellini's approach is an intriguing mixture of realism and poetry. In "The Bicycle Thief," for example, De Sica emphasized the utter frustration of his hero in a masterful shot showing the man seated on the curb while hundreds of bicyles flash between him and the camera—bicycles being ridden for pleasure when he needs one desperately in order to get work. The detail had been aptly chosen out of reality to convey the man's mental state. In "La Strada," on the other hand, Fellini shows us his abandoned heroine huddled on a curbstone in the gray light of dawn—and emphasizes her aloneness with a lone stray horse that clop-clops past her up the street. This image is less a careful ordering of reality than an arbitrarily arranged poetic simile, and all the more affecting on that account. This fleeting scene is symptomatic of the entire picture. From start to finish "La Strada" has been shaped with a sure feeling for overtone, for symbol, for a sensory rather than a literal form of perception. And what makes it completely extraordinary is the way its poetry, its symbols, its modest philosophy all flow from incidents so commonplace that only in their juxtapositions do they begin to acquire significance. It is like a modern morality play, set along the fringes of our urban society.

In any formal sense "La Strada" has no story. Its structure, like its title, suggests the straight line of the highway, beginning at the seaside by day, ending at the seaside by night. A brutal, bestial, itinerant strong-man buys a simple-minded girl from her impoverished mother to serve as an assistant in his act, his slavey and concubine. He teaches her a few simple tricks, much as he would train a dog, then takes to the road, doing his pitiful chain-breaking routine in the village squares and fairs of northern Italy. For a time they join a small circus on the outskirts of Rome, but a clown persists in goading the strong-man to a fury. When Zampano pursues the clown with a knife the police step in and the circus moves on without him. Gelsomina, the girl, has been invited to accompany the troupe but, suddenly serious, the clown gives her a reason to wait for Zampano. Perhaps he needs her. "All in this world serves some purpose," he tells her. Perhaps her whole purpose in life is to serve Zampano. And Gelsomina awaits her master with a new sense of dedication. Later, on the road, they meet the clown by accident—and by accident Zampano kills him. When the girl's whimpered reproaches become too much for him Zampano abandons her by the roadside. At the end, alone and suddenly filled with the terror of his solitude, the strong-man sobs out his agony before the infinity of sea and night sky—"like a dog," the clown had said earlier, "a dog that wants to talk to you and only barks."

Somber as this may seem, it is not handled either as a tragedy or even heavy drama. The central character, Gelsomina, is like the foolish, warm-hearted innocent that Harry Langdon used to play—and, like Langdon, Giulietta Masina fills the role with droll yet touching humor and bits of pantomime that are pure enchantment. Richard Basehart is the clown—gay, buoyant, tender, but possessed of a devil that drives him relentlessly to

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his own destruction. Even Zampano, superbly acted by Anthony Quinn, has his own rough humor and, it develops, a trace of humanity. The constantly shifting backgrounds of circuses and small towns add a purely visual fascination; while Nino Rota's affecting score creates an emotional continuity filled with sweetness and sudden moments of wild joy.

What Fellini is saying through his parable-like yet human people is the echo of John Donne's "No man is an island." But Fellini says it in the poetry of film—images created with the haunting clarity of a Cartier-Bresson photograph come to life, emotions pantomimed through a scarcely perceptible widening of the eye or stretch of the hand, scenes imagined with such intensity that their physical details are simply the clues to their fullest significance in the contour of the film. Such, for example, is the tiny interlude when the children at a farm lead Gelsomina in her clown costume through long corridors to a room where a silent little boy with peaked cap and empty eyes lies all alone in a huge bed. Gelsomina, deeply moved, tries to amuse him with her few tricks—and is promptly shooed from the room by a scandalized Sister. Or the seemingly offhand scene in which Zampano learns of Gelsomina's death from a woman hanging out her laundry, the fresh sheets flapping in the wind and all but filling the screen as she speaks, but underneath them fleeting glimpses of children at play and their laughter on the soundtrack—all memories of Gelsomina. With "La Strada" Fellini takes his place as the true successor to Rossellini and De Sica.

* * *

Walt Disney took a peek into the history books and came up with a version of the Civil War that is bound to please the South. But because **"The Great Locomotive Chase"** (Buena Vista) not only records a Confederate victory but is a rousing good adventure tale as well, it will probably also elicit ample enthusiasm at all the other points of the compass. It concerns Andrews Raiders, a small band of Union soldiers who made their way to Marietta, Georgia, early in 1862, commandeered a Confederate train and planned to drive north with it tearing up bridges and track as they went, cutting the main supply line between Atlanta and the Confederate front at Chattanooga. Incidentally, movie fans with a long memory may recall that thirty years ago Buster Keaton used this same incident for one of his greatest comedies, "The General." Disney, it appears, has abandoned the comic muse.

—Arthur Knight.

TV AND RADIO

Prosperity Day

On a recent Sunday Chet Huntley, the NBC network television news commentator, dealt with the Socialist Party of America in his weekly half-hour program "Outlook." In a Chicago West Side hotel the rump of the crusaders who marched with Eugene V. Debs and Norman Thomas were shown at their 1956 convention. Solemnly they debated whether to run a Presidential candidate in the November election or merely to state a platform of principles. The delegates were so few they could all be gotten into a fair-sized conference room. "Outlook" treated the event gently. Political parties live on demands. Today the Socialists are starved for demands, and so they walk like ghosts on ancestral battlements. There is no place for them to go.

Perhaps better to die this way, though, than to suffer the gout of success, as did the United Automobile Workers of America when they saluted themselves with a birthday party over NBC-TV on the occasion of their twentieth anniversary. This was the UAW's nationwide television debut. "Where we came from," the promotional ads on the TV page said, "where we are, and where we are going." The advance billing also listed UAW President Walter P. Reuther and a group of well-wishers including Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Time was when critics of popular program fare would say: "If only labor unions could own and operate radio and TV stations. Then we'd see vital broadcasting in the public interest." Big unions were being born then; their baptism in Depression days was dramatic. When you touched formative unionism you touched young, tough, resilient muscle. In theatre, films, novels, even radio (especially during the FDR election campaigns) unions often meant excitement. Whatever your politics were you could lend an ear, a mind, an eye, and be fairly certain that your attention and imagination would be arrested.

UAW is now twenty years old. Every year (the program host said) it negotiates 1,600 contracts with management. Some 10,000 pensioners graduate from rank and file into secure retirement. Where once there were strikes, riots, and broken heads there are now seniority, grievance machinery, and decorum. UAW members, President Reuther said in his closing speech, now have status, a sense of belonging; and they dream of a world where friendship, social justice, and brotherhood are universal realities. Undoubtedly the UAW (and the USA) are to be congratulated on the coming of age of big labor. The pity of it is that such momentous social advance should offer UAW's TV manipulators no greater program challenge.

With a vivid record of historic social struggle, with an important present and an even more powerful future, the UAW, speaking for a liberal, democratic viewpoint, chose to come on the TV screen with the "homey" image of a birthday cake. An off-screen male voice group sang some ballad doggerel: "Don't let things trouble you—Thanks to the U. A. Double-You. . . ." One of the oldest chestnuts of big company promotional films is the dinner table where the veteran employe retires on his sixty-fifth birthday. The UAW had that, too. The filmed portions, featuring congratulatory messages from the noted public figures, were polite and formal. Mr. Reuther's remarks could have been written by any union press agent. The president of the UAW has just returned from a trip to India. He must have had significant things to say about the tensions of East and West. He mentioned briefly the current lay-offs in the motor-car industry. Little was said about automation.

Little was said about anything important. Perhaps we have no right to expect more of labor unions on TV than we do of industry. But the Republican Party at election times used to wail that the Democrats had all the artists and showmen. They were not in evidence at the UAW birthday party. Or perhaps they, too, are now all prosperous—and dull.

—Robert Lewis Shayon.

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GEORGE MEREDITH:
ESSAY ON COMEDY

(Suggested by Helen F. Egleston)

The laughter of comedy . . . might be called the humor of the mind. One excellent test of the civilization of a country, I take to be the flourishing of the comic idea and comedy; and the test of true comedy is that it shall awaken thoughtful laughter.

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MUSIC TO MY EARS

Airs in Operas and Vice Versa

STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN.

THERE are airs in the operas they give in Stockholm, even as there are elsewhere. but there is also opera in the air. The venerable but remarkably compact Royal Opera has a prominent situation halfway between the polar points of Stockholm life—the Royal Palace and the Grand Hotel—and the wonderful little eighteenth-century theatre at Drottingholm has a place in the musical schedule also.

For that matter, the guides consider the onetime home of Christinne Nilsson (who was the Marguerite when the Metropolitan Opera opened its doors in 1883) a showplace still, and if they haven't yet started pointing out the apartment of Jussi Bjoerling on the Karlasvegen it is only a matter of time. To the opera-minded Stockholm means Jenny Lind and Kerstin Thorborg, Karen Branzell and such more recent singers as the lamented Torsten Ralf, Joel Berglund, and Set Svanholm.

By comparison with the Danish Royal Opera in Copenhagen, which seems to be a company of mostly young artists still in the budding stage, Stockholm suggests a full-fledged tree. Some of the voices are withering on the vine and some are just coming to full growth. Also, of course, there are those which are just beginning to bear fruit. But there is a tidy professionalism about the whole enterprise that needs but one quality—to judge from the works I have seen—to give it distinction: dynamic musical direction. That, however, is in short supply around the musical map and Stockholm is no exception.

There is, also, an underlying sobriety, typified by a "Magic Flute" in which the animals refused to be tamed by Tamino's flute because there were no animals. Also, the curtain was dropped with a resolute finality between scenes, with no real attempt to achieve an imaginative transition. A new production in January of this year (to observe the Mozart bicentenary), the concept of scenic artist Hilding Linnqvist and producer Harald André, has a peculiar mixture of dignity and frivolity, the latter not provided by Ingvar Wixell's Papageno, but by costumes for the Three Ladies featuring tight bodices and half-skirts (something in the Mack Sennett bathing-beauty tradition) which had no particular relation to anything else on stage. In the circumstances it is hardly surprising that the ladies (Ingeborg Kjellgren, Margareta Bergström, and Kerstin Meyer) seemed to be chosen for what they had to stand on rather than what they had to sing with.

It may be fallacious to associate a bright metallic sound with Scandinavian singers generally, but most of those so far heard have tended to hardness rather than warmth. This produces, of course, a desirable uniformity but also a degree of monotony. The pleasantest sound, to my ear, came from Arne Hendriksen, and it was not a sound particularly suited to Tamino, but with more promise of eventual development into a lyric Wagner voice. (Should he decide to take that course there would be expert counsel at hand from Svanholm.) Elisabeth Söderstrom (Pamina) and Busk Margit Jonsson (Papagena) are still to develop real character, while Sven Nilsson (Sarastro) and the Speaker (Sigurd Bjoerling) have a character all too well known. The musical direction of Herbert Sandberg was cozy and comfortable, with a live-and-let-live attitude partial to the singers, if not to Mozart.

As the third in the festival sequence which began with "Die Meistersinger," "Don Carlos" posed enough additional problems to give any measure of an opera-theatre desired. It showed the Stockholm theatre capable of some elaborate if not too illusive pageantry in the *auto de fe* scene, a fair enough burst of choral singing, and some loud if not really sonorous orchestral playing under Sixten Ehrling's not-too-knowing direction. Helge Refn's stage design features a double-winged staircase meeting in a balcony at the back which crept into practically every scene and had no decided purpose in any. Neither in the crypt nor in the cloister garden and least of all in the *auto de fe* did it have more than arbitrary place in the background. I was scarcely attracted by the predominance of black in the costuming, and the notion of playing the seven scenes in two acts meant that the first ran an hour and forty minutes without any particular dramatic continuity. As for pictorial qualities or direction it was eons from the Gerard-Webster effort at the Metropolitan.

Six strong singers are par for the requirements of "Don Carlos"; this production did not really offer one sound one, meaning one whose effort was absorbing throughout. For a while it seemed that Kerstin Meyer, the picturesque, well-disciplined Eboli, was such a one, but "O Don Fatale" was too much for both her vocal range and her dynamic power. Otherwise there was Joel Berglund in a ceremonial appearance as Philip, gruffer than ever and a fine artist still; a lightweight tenor of Italian extraction named Luigi Carrara as Carlos, Erik Sundquist, of admirable bearing but dry vocal quality as Posa, and the steady Sigurd Bjoerling in the brief role of the Inquisitor.

As for Aase Nordmo-Lövberg, those who have been singing her praises should wait for her to do more singing worthy of the praises. This Elisabetta was as spotty as the Eva of a few days before and, if the uncertainties of voice might be attributed to some passing inconvenience, there was too little artistic impulse in her projection of the part, too much that was tentative and non-dramatic, to make one regard her future with any particular confidence.

AT ANOTHER extreme of theatrical means is the old theatre at Drottingholm, a royal residence in the Versailles manner which is fifteen minutes from the Royal Opera by swift taxi (longer in traffic). The theatre is a marvel of ingenuity (respecting the time of its construction in the 1760s) and amazingly well preserved, even to scenery, drops, and set pieces of the eighteenth century. Its 360 seats are cunningly arranged in a foreshadowing of the megaphone principle which is basic in the acoustical science, and it still has an air of freshness, due in large part to a long sleep (after 1800) from which it was awakened in 1921.

In these formalized, highly critical surroundings, however, the performance of Mozart's "La Finta Semplice" I saw was a patchwork of good voices and inferior singing, broad comedy and little style. I am filled with awe that Mozart could have written such a playable score at age thirteen, but it doesn't seem to me the more worth an evening's reverence for that reason. Close contact with the stage promotes audibility, but that may also be a liability when enthusiasm outweighs skill. Since the singers are not celebrated, names may be omitted, but I should note Lamberto Gardelli as a name to note—and avoid—where the conducting of Mozart is concerned. The periwigged musicians (with hornrimmed spectacles in profusion) made an incongruous picture in the pit but an even less harmonious sound. This is one of the "airs" about opera in Stockholm that might be reconditioned.

—IRVING KOLODIN.

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Fiction

Continued from page 13

bank, lives on "Swellhead Row," and clearly suffers from too much parental influence. But Junior (who is thus addressed by almost every character in the book) changes rapidly in a few pages, for Father dies in the first chapter and leaves a codicil to his will which stipulates that Junior must marry Marie, one of two daughters of a banker in a neighboring town. Junior, it so happens, prefers Marie's younger sister Pauline, and from that point on Mr. Selby tries to communicate to his readers the agony of marrying Marie and of attempting to convince mother-in-law and neighbors that the codicil is really being obeyed. From this plight, of course, Mr. Selby might have produced a perfectly good novel, and he tries hard enough to do so by bringing in a little suspense about the true identity of Pauline and, by stocking his story with a cast of small-town department-store owners, grocers, icemen, and tight-lipped wives, all of whom watch Junior's indecision with unabashed interest. But in spite of all this neither they nor Mr. Selby manage to probe deeply enough to convey any real reason for their interest to anybody except themselves. As a result "Time Was . . ." never seems any more complete than is its title.

—JOHN HAVERSTICK.

ALSO NOTED: "Dead Warrior," by John Myers Myers (Little, Brown, $3.75), corrals a string of Runyonesque characters and allows them to caper through the frontier town of Dead Warrior during the 1880s Magistrate Mosby Carruthers is "resident hermit" of the ghost town and the inheritor of the Three Deuces stage coach. Then the town starts filling up again with prospectors, tart-talking dolls, and renegades whose main sports consist of drinking, gambling, and hangings. A lively, humorous tale told in clipped, episodic style.

"The Judas Figures," by Audrey Erskine Lindop (Appleton-Century-Crofts, 3.75), concentrates on the final days of a seven-year struggle between the forces of primitive evil symbolized by an outlaw band and the patient strength of a Catholic priest. The people of the Mexican town of Quantana are held in bondage by belief in ghosts, witches, and assorted superstitions. But, thanks to the efforts of Father Keogh, they at last cast their lot with the Church by burning paper figures of the outlaws during Good Friday ceremonials. A meaty novel by the author of "The Singer and the Song," published three years ago.

"Jenny," by Ada Cook Lewis (Rinehart, $3.95), takes its readers down some sidestreets of eighteenth-century London that Miss Winsor's "Forever Amber" overlooked. At a lively gait the story follows Jenny's progress from the city's amoral *beau monde* to the immoral denizens of Newgate prison until she at last finds a suitable mate. Miss Lewis's first historical novel expertly peoples an era with down-to-earth, lusty figures and palatable melodrama.

"The Story of Lola Gregg," by Howard Fast (Blue Heron Press, $3), takes a topsy-turvy view of things by picturing a heroic Communist leader who is pursued by a pack of reactionary FBI men. Lola melodramatically saves her husband from the trigger-happy pack by talking him into giving himself up. Cardboard characters and soapbox oratory. —S. P. MANSTEN.

Architecture

Continued from page 10

engineering solution as in the work of a Nervi; or from the playful, even fantastic, treatment of volumes and surfaces as with Le Corbusier. Thick stained glass can be incorporated into the concrete slab, of which it then becomes a part.

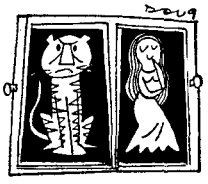
Mr. Damaz's magnificently illustrated examples range over the work of some 300 artists and architects from Scandinavia to Italy. They include play sculpture and schools (with some wonderful and no doubt inexpensive seeing-and-feeling murals from Scandinavia); exhibition buildings and sculpture (Switzerland and Italy outstanding here); business buildings (the genesis of Henry Moore's screen atop the Time-Life building in London is shown and valuably described in the artist's words); memorials such as Rome's Ardeatine Caves or the American memorial at Bastogne with Leger's mosaics. Many of the examples are admittedly controversial, for it is the purpose of the book to raise questions of "synthesis of the arts" in all their breadth.

When a distinguished architect cannot wring a few thousand dollars out of a public housing authority to vary the monotony of several million dollars worth of pink cliff; when Portland rejects a rare Renoir sculpture because it is nude it could happen again tomorrow—the time has come to show our *elected* officials what can happen when enlightened artists meet enlightened patrons.

WRIGHT'S LATEST: As you may be well aware, Frank Lloyd Wright isn't easily discouraged. When not so long ago the editor of one of our architectural magazines presumed to tell the master that "God did not exhaust himself on the day he created you" the greatest of them all was ready with the perfect answer. "I am not tired yet," he announced.

Wright's newest, the nineteen-story apartment and office building for the H. C. Price Co. of Bartlesville, Okla., is hardly the achievement of a tired man. Though built of steel and glass and concrete, as are the latest business buildings on Park Avenue, it is as gay as those additions to the Manhattan skyline are solemn. At least that is the impression anyone will gather who opens a handsome picture book called **"The Story of the Tower: The Tree That Escaped the Forest"** (Horizon Press. $6).

More than once Wright has told us that "the machine should build the building. But," he warns, "it is not



Your Literary I. Q.

Conducted by John T. Winterich

MEAN ANIMALS

Helene Nitzsche of Maquoketa, Iowa, submits a dozen titles containing the name of a beautiful but unreliable feline. Please put the critters in the proper cages. Answers on page 28.

1. "The Tiger"	( ) George B. McClellan, Jr.
2. "Tiger Tiger"	( ) Bhabani Bhattacharya
3. "Shabby Tiger"	( ) Tenzing (with J. R. Ullman)
4. "The Temple Tiger"	( ) Frank R. Stockton
5. "Tiger at the Gates"	( ) Robert Shaplen
6. "Bugles and a Tiger"	( ) Jean Giraudoux
7. "A Forest of Tigers"	( ) William Blake
8. "Tiger of the Snows"	( ) Howard Spring
9. "He Who Rides a Tiger"	( ) Roman Proske
10. "Lions, Tigers and Me"	( ) John Masters
11. "The Lady, or the Tiger?"	( ) Jim Corbett
12. "The Gentleman and the Tiger"	( ) Max White

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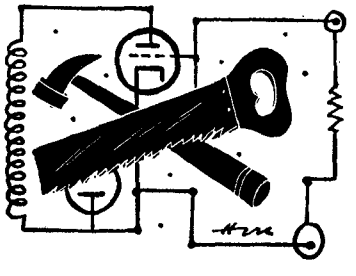
necessary for that reason to build as though the building, too, were a machine." His vision of the skyscraper of tomorrow isn't exactly mechanistic: "Out of this varied mass of shade trees and flowering shrubs, see the spider —steel—spinning its web to enmesh glass—glass clear—glass translucent —glass in relief—glass in color. Iridescent surfaces of this light-fabric rising high against the blue of the whole city, the city row seen as a park, the metal fabrications of the shafts themselves turquoise or gold, silver, bronze. . . ."

It would be a shame if New York were forever deprived of a skyscraper designed by Frank Lloyd Wright, no matter if Bartlesville be all that Mr. Price of the Price Tower says it is. "The people with the big, fine ideas remained there," we are informed. "As their enterprises propered they did not pick up and move to larger cities. Instead they made every effort to make their town a better place in which to live." —WAYNE ANDREWS.

FOOTNOTE TO ARCHITECTURE: Since the late Emil Kaufmann did not live to witness the publication of his study entitled **"Architecture in the Age of Reason: Baroque and Post-Baroque in England, Italy, and France"** (Harvard University Press, $10), it would be ungracious to point out all of its shortcomings. Unfortunately, it in no way lives up to the expectations of scholars familiar with his "Von Ledoux Bis Le Corbusier" or with his recent analysis of Boullée, Ledoux, and Lequeu. Possibly the author knew too much about the architecture of the eighteenth century in England, France, and Italy. Too much, that is, for the task of writing a book.

This monograph, which is peppered with as many footnotes as it is with commas, is really not much more than an exhaustive reading list. Readers who demand something more than citations from obscure authorities will be less than impressed by Mr. Kaufmann's rare attempts to wrestle with ideas. On such occasions he fights a losing battle, as when he points out that "the essence of the architectural development of the nineteenth century was the parallelism of two main currents, a conservative and a revolutionary one." —W. A.



Wanted: More Space for More Minds

Continued from page 8

believer nor the catatonic disbeliever is using the room guaranteed him by the Constitution to make the religious area of life one of continual search and wide generosity.

"Congress shall make no law . . . abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble. . . ." It is good to read these words and feel how broad and open the space is that they provide for our human minds and consciences. And the same holds true for all the other provisions in the Bill of Rights: provisions that make us variously secure in our persons and property—and thereby enable us to take our minds off problems of self-defense and occupy them with the constructive enterprises of living.

WE NEED scarcely repeat, here, what has often been said about our having to exercise "eternal vigilance" with regard to our basic freedoms. But we need to recognize that such vigilance alone cannot keep these freedoms alive. Watch can be kept over a corpse. Thus, freedom of speech cannot be protected by our merely keeping an anxious eye on those who would shut us up—though such watchfulness is necessary. It is best protected by our saying things that make accurate, responsible, and generous good sense; and by our being willing, when we have said our say, to listen to others—or even to listen *before* we say our say. It is best protected, in brief, where minds behave like minds—and not like mere appendages to vacuity, prejudice, or blind factionalism.

The very temptation we face, in a time of fear and anger, to "huddle" with our mental, emotional, and professional kind can lead us into a far from healthy state. It involves the risk that, exercising freedom of speech and assembly, we will talk ourselves into adding phantom threats to real ones—hitting out as furiously, or as nervously, at the one as at the other.

Further than this, the temptation to "huddle" with our kind involves the risk that we will, as a "fear-sharing" group, talk ourselves into a strange "apartness" from our society—an "apartness" that can all too easily turn into a sense of being *excluded, discriminated against,* and *undervalued.*

As a matter of fact, working as we ourselves do and have done over the years, with many different types of groups—racial, economic, religious, professional, political—we have been struck by the number and variety of groups that seem increasingly to feel themselves excluded, discriminated against, and undervalued. More than once we have found that when two groups—liberal and reactionary, or labor and management—are opposing each other over some issue *each sees itself as a beleaguered minority.*

When a *sense of minority status* is thus simultaneously experienced by both parties to conflict it means, we believe, that each party has been talking too exclusively and too anxiously to itself. The members of each side have been *monologuing in unison* —and have monologued themselves into a state where they feel that their one consuming task is that of self-defense. Or to put the matter another way, they have exercised their Constitutional freedom of speech and assembly to trap themselves: to induce in themselves the distribution of energy that goes with fear and anger rather than with constructiveness and clarity of thought. Above we ventured the term "voluntary catatonia" to describe the immobility of a mind that has been given room to move. Here—even though we recognize that the term is an exaggeration —we are tempted to speak of "voluntary paranoia" to describe this use of freedom to talk ourselves and assemble ourselves into a conviction of being persecuted.

THE psychological space our society grants us is not, of course, experienced only in relation to our basic governmental structure or our Bill of Rights. It is experienced more intimately within the many smaller institutions—the secondary institutions, we might call them—that represent our will to enact, and not merely pronounce, our basic principles.

From our beginnings as a nation we have been constantly engaged, we might say, in furnishing the large house of our social intentions. Within it we have located the public-school system, courts of law, churches, libraries, playgrounds, universities, parks, businesses, factories, hospitals, museums, welfare agencies, a host of voluntary associations, and, needless to say, homes. We ourslves find endless encouragement and incentive in one fact about our society: namely, that in almost every one of our secondary institutions the line of evolution, through the years, has been toward the providing of more and more space for the human spirit to grow in.

Take our public school system, for

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example. It was designed in the first place to give people room: to set them free from the trap of illiteracy and ignorance. But at first the school was able to open up only a few fields of knowledge—and to open these to only a scant portion of the population, for a few weeks of each year and a few years of life. The space thus granted to the learning mind turned out, in all sorts of ways, to be too small. Therefore, gradually, the broadened curriculum; the lengthened school term; the stretching out of the system to embrace high schools, junior colleges, and adult evening schools, at one end of the scale, and nursery schools and kindergartens, at the other; the provision of special classes for retarded children and migratory children; home teachers for the ill and the handicapped.

Or take our colleges and universities. In the beginning—made in the image of European institutions—these gave a very few people room to move into professional life: into the ministry and the law. But again their evolution has been toward making space for people, for more individuals, and for more aspects of each individual: the enriched curriculum; free public colleges and universities; extension divisions; fellowships and scholarships in increasing numbers.

The polling booth has become, in psychological terms, a far larger place than it used to be. With the institution of the secret ballot it became, overnight, large enough to grant privacy —and therefore a new freedom from pressure—to the person casting his vote. With the passing of the Fifteenth Amendment to the Constitution, and later the Nineteenth Amendment, it became large enough to accommodate whole segments of the population that had previously been excluded from it: "The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude"; and "The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex."

It goes without saying that there are still many "bars across the way." Facilities are still far from adequate—in schools, libraries, clinics, playgrounds. Also, there are bars of custom, prejudice, and ignorance. The important thing in a society like ours, however, is to know what we are about. We are a space-making and space-seeking people. During the

early stages of our history there was always room on the geographical frontier. When our economy was burgeoning into its unique form we characteristically said, "There is always room at the top"—thus expressing the fact that the old pattern of rigid class levels had been broken. Oddly enough, we have not made for ourselves a matching phrase to express what we have, since the beginning, been doing in almost countless ways: making more room for more people, and for more aspects of our human nature, within one educational, cultural, economic, and political institution after another.

TO THINK and feel our way through this drama of space-wanting and space-making is to achieve, it seems to us, a certain clarity in the midst of confusion. It is to achieve a standard of measurement that can be applied to a host of different situations, and to a host of different problems.

This standard of measurement, for one thing, suggests an answer to the citizen's perennial question "What can I do?" Well, let's look around. Who, for example, is needlessly shut up in himself, without a chance to speak out his mind or share his experiences? In whom are latent powers held back from development and expression by lack of opportunity? Who is excluded from full participation in the activities of his group or country? Where do groups stand apart from each other in fear or misunderstanding because no common ground has been provided for their meeting? Who is standing pat in error because he does not know how to move out of it and still keep his self-respect? Who, because of age or disability, has been pushed out of the mainstream of life into some stagnant and lonely pool? When we start looking around us with such questions as these in mind the space-making adventure of our society becomes an intimately personal one.

What can I do? is not, however, the only question that the space-making concept, applied to our institutions, invites us to ask. A second question comes readily to mind. *What is now being done that deserves appreciation and support?* Here the answers are so many and varied that no sampling can properly suggest their range.

Into the offices of the New York Adult Education Council, day after day, come men and women, young and old, all of them tacitly asking, "Where is the right place for me—with my background, interests, resources, and limitations—to go on growing?" One woman spoke for many when she explained that "four walls and empty rooms can break your spirit" and that "classes mean people and ideas." For others the problem is that of moving beyond work they do not enjoy and preparing themselves for what they have always wanted to be; and for others it is that of growing on their present job. Still others want to learn more about themselves as human beings, about their children, and about their world. But all of them, in one way or another, feel crowded and are seeking more room in which to stretch their minds.

Or the mental health movement comes to mind: this newest development from the grassroots of the American community. At Hillsborough High School, in Tampa, Florida, in the spring of 1955 the students in *family living* classes met as a group with their parents once a week for six weeks to think their way through to better mutual understanding and to arrive at family policies that would be accepted and respected by teenagers and adults alike. What the teacher of these classes, Dale Womble, was effectively doing was to give the two generations room to move toward each other and, in the words of one historic American document, "to sitt down here close togither."

WHO, then, are the space-makers among us? Their name, happily, is legion. They are in organizations that work for the rehabilitation of the handicapped. They are counselors and educators in penal institutions, helping prisoners to become more truly themselves, and more ready for the business of living than they have ever been before, As play therapists they are making room for small frightened children who have been crowded into emotional corners to find their way back to a world of reality, creativeness, and affection. As supporters of the Urban League and the United Negro College Fund, or the Association on American Indian Affairs, they are opening up new opportunities for growth where these have been denied. As supporters of such groups as the Iron Curtain Refugee Committee they

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LITERARY I.Q. ANSWERS

Column Two should read: 12, 9, 8, 11, 7, 5, 1, 3, 10, 6, 4, 2.

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are opening a way back toward freedom for those trapped within totalitarian regimes. Through such organizations as CARE, Save the Children Federation, and Foster Parents Plan for War Orphans they are giving substance to the term "human family." As members of a host of voluntary associations—from Rotary International to Association for Childhood Education International—they are quietly enacting "one world" by bringing peoples of different lands together in terms of basic common interests.

What do they have to cope with? First, there are the forces of *sheer inertia*. What we have here is not so much deliberate ill will as a simple human tendency to translate the familiar into the "natural." Slums have "always" existed; certain types of people have "always" done menial work; nations have "always" been separate and competitive and we cannot expect that an "unnatural" set-up like that of the United Nations will really work.

Second, there is the force of *limited imagination*. Those, for example, who cannot imagine what it feels like to be "retired" after a long life of usefulness into loneliness, futility, and dependence are not likely to contribute much to the releasing of our older people into new experiences, occupations, and companionships.

Again, there are forces of *entrenched prejudice*. Prejudice may be fairly mild and harmless, or deep and destructive; but invariably it is marked by two tendencies: the tendency to bring all members of the disparaged group under one covering judgment and to lose sight of their individual differences; and the further tendency to exaggerate the difference between this group as a whole and the favored group with which it is contrasted. A person may be quiet in his exercise of prejudices: may simply not go near certain groups if he can help it. Or he may be violent. But two things he does not do: make room for the individual qualities of those in the disparaged group; or make room for that group and his own to know each other better.

Next we note the force of *vested interest*. We normally think of vested interests as accumulations of economic power. But there are many other kinds. Within a certain national organization, for example, policy has become the vested interest of a handful of people who live within one area. These individuals see one another often between meetings; call one another by their first names even in convention sessions where most people are strangers; and quietly "run things"—so that the organization has become, in effect, a tight local unit with a large national membership as a dues-paying appendage.

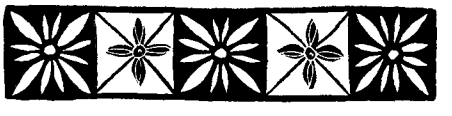
The fifth force that makes for crowding is *fear*, particularly when it is widespread or intense enough to be called panic. We see the physical demonstrations of this when, for example, fire in a public gathering place sends people into a destructive frenzy of mutual shoving and pushing. We see the cultural demonstration of it in many places today: people are fired, for instance, with no chance to state their case, because a rumor has reached their employer or department head that they once belonged to certain organizations.

Another and final type of crowding and cornering is the *deliberate exploitation of fear*. One of the favorite panic-rousing warnings of today is against social security. "Beware the government when it brings gifts," cry the modern Cassandras. "Social security is an invitation to laziness," they scream. "It will weaken our moral fiber; make us a people who live by handouts." Meanwhile the deep and often tragic issues of illness, accident, and aging in a society in which the individual is increasingly at the mercy of forces he cannot control are completely overlooked.

WE SAY often that we are living in an age of change; and to specify what we mean we point to such factors as urbanization, automation, our new nomadism, and the rest. As we contemplate these we often seem appalled. But may it not be that we are almost ready to go in for space-making on a grand scale—and that our confusions are a prologue to this enterprise rather than merely an epilogue to the world we have known?

We cannot miss the fact that more and more first-rate minds are weighing the possibility that this is what is taking place: that a new age may be in the shaping, and that man's spirit may be stretching itself to match the proportions of this new age. Neither can we miss the fact that more and more of us are hungry for adventures of mind and spirit that have some scope to them.

A woman in whose home we were visiting made a remark that might sound as though it came from an older day: "My husband likes a woman to stay in her place." But then she added, "I don't mind, though—because he's always in it with me when he can be." In these words, affectionately spoken, we heard a new age speaking: a nurturing age; and therefore a space-making one.



Americana

Continued from page 16

reader is Washington's shrewdness in military affairs and the sharp eye he displayed for the countryside he traversed. These are apparent in the first document in the book, a facsimile of Washington's Journal of his initial visit to the Ohio Valley in 1753 at the age of twenty-one. This was a semi-diplomatic mission and was followed by three military ventures—the disaster at Fort Necessity in 1754, the Braddock campaign of the next year, and the victory at what is now Pittsburgh in 1758. From Washington's journals and letters one gets a well-etched picture of the growth of his military understanding, and it becomes evident that the abilities he showed in the Revolution evolved from the experience he absorbed in the Ohio Valley. Washington's two business trips to the region to visit his holdings—in 1770 and 1784—are remarkable chiefly for the light they throw on his land hunger. Mr. Cleland has done an excellent job of editing and provided readable maps to illustrate the text. —ALDEN WHITMAN.

PIONEER KAINTUCK: John Filson promoted the first land boom in Kentucky, wrote the state's first history, drew and published its first map, almost founded the city of Cincinnati, and built Daniel Boone into American folklore. Filson, a Pennsylvanian, was born about 1753, John Walton tells us in his new biography **"John Filson of Kentucke"** (University of Kentucky Press, $4). Previous authorities had put the year as early as 1747; Mr. Walton makes out a sound case for his choice. Filson went to Kentucky in 1783—again a later date than previous historians have selected, and again Mr. Walton's argument is convincing. Filson had only five years to live—there is a mystery about his death, though the balance of evidence indicates he was slain by an Indian—but those five years were crowded with activity and were of vast importance in spreading the fame of Filson's adopted commonwealth. His "Discovery, Settlement, and Present State of Kentucke," published at Wilmington, Delaware, in 1784 (there was no press in Kentucky), was a remarkable pioneer venture (albeit an imperfect one), and has had a long history, which includes the high tribute of plagiarism. Filson's name survives in that of the Filson Club of Louisville, which has published many books on Kentucky and puts out a historical quarterly.

—JOHN T. WINTERICH.

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KINGSLEY DOUBLE-CROSTIC NO. 1162

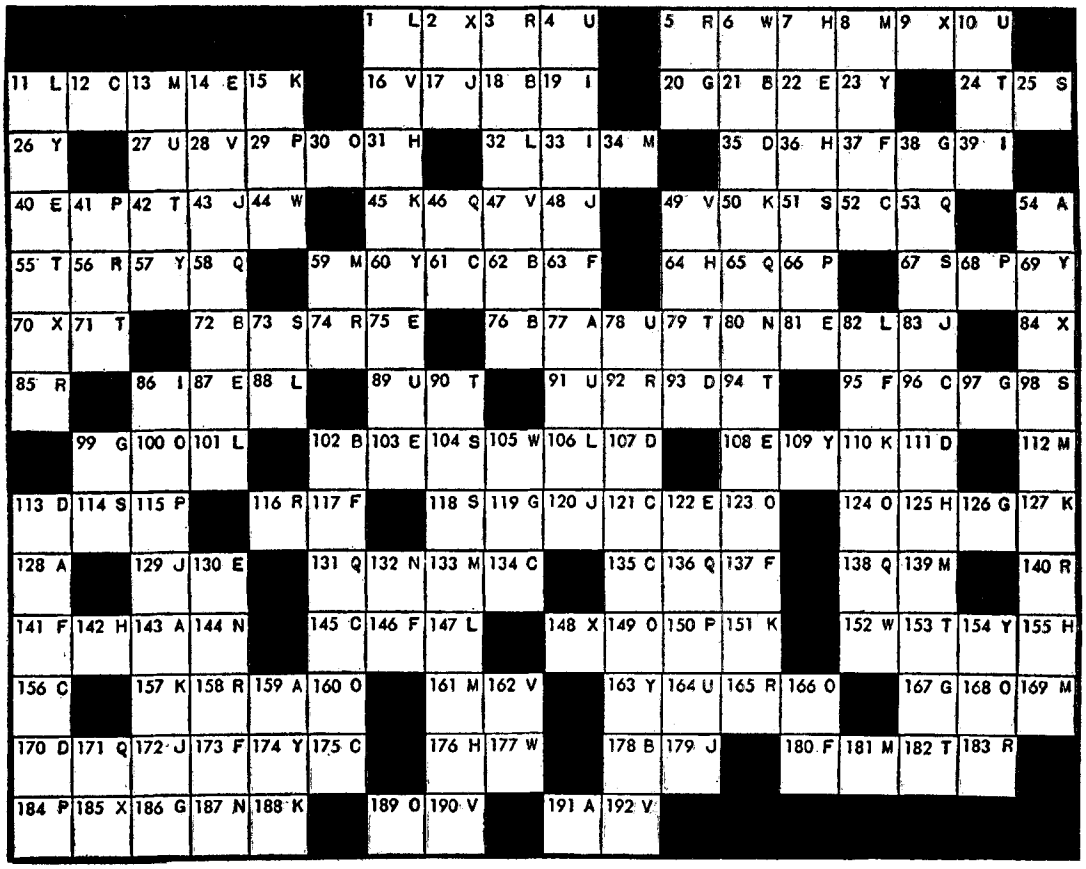
Reg. U.S. Patent Office

By Doris Nash Wortman

DEFINITIONS	WORDS
A. In 1892, Zangwill wrote about its "Children."	191 77 128 54 143 159
B. Gruesome object formerly described to naughty children, to frighten them.	62 21 76 102 18 72 178
C. Extremely popular contemporary writer of homely, moralistic verse (full name).	134 156 135 121 12 175 61 96 52 145
D. Word Shakespeare used sometimes to mean *cousin*.	107 93 111 113 170 35
E. Effervescent drink, natural or artificial (2 wds.).	81 122 22 108 75 14 87 40 103 130
F. Carrageen; chief substance of blancmange (2 wds.).	37 141 173 95 146 137 117 63 180
G. To wallop.	38 186 99 20 126 167 119 97
H. April's is girlish, according to Sir William Watson.	155 64 142 7 36 176 125 31
I. Billie's real given name in "Born Yesterday."	39 19 86 33
J. In a different way (somewhat rare).	179 120 17 43 83 172 129 48
K. Unfortunate.	110 50 127 157 151 188 15 45
L. Describing the look of the bemused young lover (comp.).	11 147 1 101 106 88 82 32
M. Time of year called "wunderschön" by German poets (3 wds.).	133 181 8 112 59 161 139 169 13 34
N. Narcissus refused to be her boy friend so she pined away.	80 187 144 132
O. This year's *Solanum tuberosum* (2 wds.).	123 30 160 124 149 166 100 189 168
P. In economics the "value" a thing has merely for its utility in production.	41 115 184 150 29 68 66
Q. Undistinguished; unmusical.	65 138 171 53 46 136 58 131
R. When Jane Austen said it she meant love affairs; today's woman means the accessory equipment of her vacuum cleaner.	3 116 140 74 56 92 5 183 158 85 165
S. Endured insomnia (2 wds.).	51 25 67 104 73 118 98 114
T. Want of decent reserve.	55 182 42 153 24 90 71 79 94
U. Beat or pulse in music (Italian word).	89 78 10 4 164 91 27
V. Crown of a building (2 wds.).	162 47 192 28 16 190 49
W. Acknowledges frankly.	6 105 177 152 44
X. Appreciate with taste or discernment.	70 9 185 84 148 2
Y. Titular hero of Paramore's "Ballad" who was "tough as steak" (2 wds.).	26 154 23 60 174 163 69 57 109

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-odd WORDS, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. Alongside each definition, there is a row of dashes—one for each letter in the required word. When you have guessed a word, write it on the dashes, and also write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square of the puzzle diagram. . . When the squares are all filled in, you will find that you have completed a quotation from some published work. If read up and down, the letters in the diagram have no meaning. . . Black squares indicate ends of words; if there is no black square at the right side of the diagram, the word carries over to the next line. . . When all the WORDS are filled in, their initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Of great help to the solver are this acrostic feature and the relative shapes of words in the diagram as they develop. Authority for spellings and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary, Second Edition.



Solution of last week's Double-Crostic will be found on page 24 of this issue.

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SR/ RECORDINGS SECTION

JUNE 30, 1956

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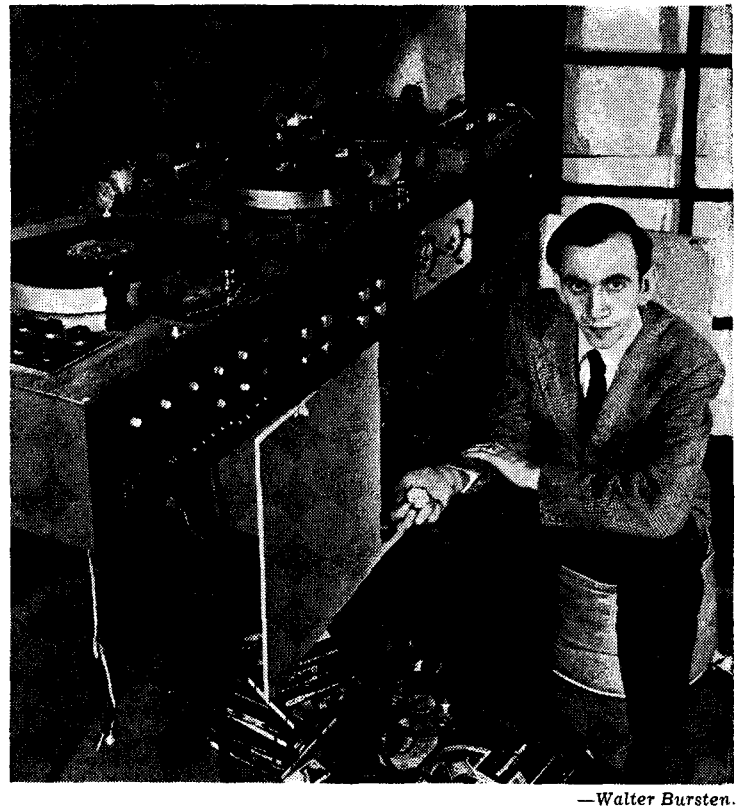
THE PIANO AND THE ALCHEMIST



—*Walter Bursten.*

By FRED GRUNFELD

IN AN upper Manhattan apartment house that resembles a wing of the British Museum a thirty-four-year-old Pole named Jan Holcman is engaged in the search for the inner secret—or perhaps what the medieval alchemists called the "philosopher's stone"—of piano playing. To this end he has constructed a laboratory in which any alchemist from Jaber to Paracelsus might feel at home. Though on the fifth floor, the studio is as secluded as a monastery cellar. To make sure that stray noises cannot disturb his research, and that no late-evening *fortes* will filter through to the neighbors, Holcman has sheathed the walls and ceiling with double insulation and fortified the floor with an extra layer of concrete. "I work late at night," says Holcman in a thick but pleasant accent, "and there's quite a lot of thumping here, but I never have any trouble."

He has taken equally elaborate measures to control the lighting of his studio. With a single chair-side switch, of the sort radio engineers refer to as a "pot," he can dim or brighten any or all of the battery of lamps installed around the room, giving him anything from total darkness to 1000 candlepower illumination. Most impressive of all is electronic equipment with which Holcman carries on his experiments with piano recordings—what he calls "putting records under the microscope." The microscope, in this instance, permits not optic but sonic magnification of a sort. Basically it consists of three turntables and tonearms mounted in an ingenious cabinet which also houses a tape recorder (a Magnecorder rebuilt by Holcman himself), a cluster of laborsaving pushbuttons, and a remarkably compact control panel that replaces the conventional patch-board. A set of controls allows the inventor instant choice of 200 different combinations of inputs and outputs—filters, speakers, pickups, microphones, and so forth. "I consulted

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half a dozen engineers," Holcman says proudly. "They told me it couldn't be done. But here it is, and it saves me not only work but space. I only hope I never have to re-wire it."

Holcman's audio equipment makes him the envy of even his most lavishly outfitted audiophile friends, but he himself is not particularly interested in "high fidelity" as the term is generally understood. His sole concern is with the art and technique of great pianism, and with such formidable figures as Busoni, Sauer, Rachmaninoff, Hofmann, Lhevinne, and Rosenthal, most of whom made their recordings long before "fidelity" was so much as a gleam in some engineer's inner ear. Holcman intends to publish the results of his investigations in a projected 1,000-page study of twentieth-century keyboard technique and pedagogics. As source material he has collected some 1,600 78rpm piano discs, as well as a multitude of player-piano rolls and acoustic cylinders (all transferred to tape for easy reference), together with "every important article written about the practice and teaching of pianism in the last fifty years."

"I am missing about a dozen really important recordings for my work," he admits, "Raoul Pugno playing Mendelssohn's 'Spinning Song' for instance, Gieseking in Liszt's Twelfth Rhapsody, one of two records by Alexander Michalowski, who was Landowska's teacher, and Vianna da Motta playing one of his own works. Da Motta was a Busoni pupil—really a great artist, but not known at all in this country."

Strange things happen when Holcman subjects his historic discs to "microscopic" scrutiny. A light goes on; the name "Rachmaninoff" appears in a fixture above the turntables. A Chopin record begins to play. Just as the end of a run is reached, Holcman presses a button: the tone-arm rises automatically and holds its position, remaining poised precisely over the groove it has just vacated. "Rachmaninoff" vanishes and "Hofmann" flashes on. The same opening bars of Chopin issue from the speaker—"But listen to the difference in the phrasing," Holcman prompts. As Hofmann concludes his run, there is another interruption and Rachmaninoff takes up the piece. The next few measures are repeated by Hofmann in due course, and so the two leapfrog through the measures until another run appears. "Wait," says Holcman, "we'll compare this in slow motion."

The passage is now played at half the normal speed and (in accordance with the laws of acoustics) at an octave below normal pitch. What had seemed like a smooth, evenly-articulated run suddenly emerges with definite bumps and accents; Rachmaninoff's masterful deedle-deedle-deedle-deedle becomes, on slower examination a rather ragged dee-dee-bum-dee-dee-dee-bum-dee. "You see," Holcman announces happily from the controls, "at halfspeed you can detect technical failings that pass right by your ears in ordinary performance. No artist is really immune from these problems, and even the most extraordinary technician will show flaws under the microscope, just as the most beautiful woman will look less than perfect under a klieg light. But I'm not out just to reveal the blemishes in everybody's playing. I want to discover just what makes a great pianist, and to establish a scientific basis for teaching and criticism. An objective basis. For that we have to dissect these performances."

Holcman has dissected the records of over 200 pianists, analyzing such details as tempo, phrasing, embellishment, and the "symmetry" of both hands in unison passages. All finger technique, he has concluded, is determined by four elements that can all be separately and scientifically measured. "A man's *accuracy* can be determined easily enough by electronic devices that can tell a false note better than the most sharp-eared critic. *Quantity* can be checked by any counting device; if a pianist plays only ten out of twelve notes on the page, the machine will show it. *Speed,* of course, can be measured by a metronome. It doesn't deceive you. But the most important aspect is evenness or *symmetry,* and that involves two things. In a scale passage, for instance, you have symmetry of timing on the one hand—whether the notes follow each other at even intervals. And there is the symmetry of dynamics—does the pianist use equal intensity in striking each key? Sometimes we must also take into account gradations in force, in a crescendo or diminuendo. All this can be measured, either by a specially constructed electronic timer, which I don't have, or by a very sensitive ear, which I do."

DESPITE Holcman's insistence on a scientific approach to criticism, he holds no brief whatever for "mechanical" playing. His heroes all belong to the generation of the grand manner. "Busoni, Rachmaninoff, and Hofmann have been replaced by talented craftsmen," he says rather bitterly. "Certainly we have plenty of virtuosi today, but they resemble efficient machines. They project the composition all right, but they are too inhibited to present their own interpretation. That takes something more than just a careful reading of notes, a good memory, and a clean technique."

Holcman has elaborated on this point in his first book, "The Legacy of Chopin," a study of the composer's thoughts and attitudes which was published two years ago by the Philosophical Library. "The secret of effective interpretation does not lie in faithful reproduction," he asserts:

> Performing artists may be divided into three groups: those who have nothing to say and hold their peace—the gray officialdom of music; those who have a great deal to say and speak out—the dictators of progress; and—the most dangerous group—those who have nothing to say but pretend they are bearers of important tidings, insisting on being believed. Busoni belonged to the second group; he was one of its most brilliant representatives; he demanded of his audiences musical preparation and a measure of imagination. Those who came to his recitals with preconceived ideas as to how Bach, Beethoven, and Chopin "should" sound left bewildered and disappointed.

In the artistic hierarchy that Holcman has established for his survey of the century's pianists, even Busoni must take a back seat—for it is Josef Hofmann whom he considers "undoubtedly the greatest pianist of our times." He has mustered a bulky body of evidence to support his contention, and intends to publish a monograph on the subject. "I am accustomed to having people argue with me that there is no objective way of proving Hofmann greater than, say, Rachmaninoff or Rosenthal. But this is exactly what I'm driving at—some accurate means to make judgments about a great performance. It's not easy to say why one is greater than another. It's true that there are no machines to measure the relative worth and validity of an artist's musical conception. But—," and here a combative note creeps into Holcman's customary detachment, "anyone who wants to debate these points cannot dismiss the technical evidence by saying there's no arguing about matters of taste. He should know what he's talking about, and be able to prove that he can hear what he claims to appreciate."

Connoisseurs and critics are best advised to leave their prejudices at home when they visit the alchemist's laboratory. Not long ago a certain critic who "regards himself as the Socrates of pianism" suffered a major setback when he came to hear some of Holcman's rarer items. In the course of their conversation he asserted bluntly that no one had recorded Chopin's B Minor Mazurka as beautifully as Rosenthal, and that Friedman's version of the piece was "scandalous." Then he committed the cardinal error

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of declining to discuss the matter when his host ventured to express some doubt. Holcman thereupon trotted out five different editions of the work. Without revealing their names, he played Kapell, Rosenthal, Rubinstein, Friedman, and Zecchi in that order; then the critic was asked which one he preferred, and why. Needless to say, he chose the fourth in the sequence, adding that "it must have been Rosenthal, because he didn't have those ghastly Friedman mannerisms." (Holcman's appreciation of experts and critics is, consequently, rather limited.)

On several occasions in his career Holcman has used his own pianism to good advantage: it has even saved his life. When the Germans invaded his native city of Lodz in 1939 he escaped to the Russian zone of Poland and won a scholarship for advanced study at the Moscow Conservatory. In 1942 he managed to join the orchestra of General Anders's Polish Army (they considered him too undernourished to carry a rifle). Eventually the army left Russia for service in Italy and the Near East; Holcman was discharged in Palestine, where he remained as a teacher and recitalist until Juilliard offered him a scholarship in 1947. "I teach now, for the most part," he explains, "and between teaching and research I put in eighteen hours a day. Fortunately, last year I had a grant from Brown University (the Howard Fellowship) that made it possible for me to build all this equipment."

As a byproduct of his experiments he has perfected the nearest thing to an electronic comedy routine ever devised by a pianist. By listening to certain recordings at half speed he has learned to mimic their styles and mannerisms on his own piano. He can imitate a Landowska, a Rubinstein, or a Horowitz with uncanny accuracy, recording himself (an octave lower than written) on his tape machine at 7½ inches per second: played back at 15 ips the sound closely resembles a harpsichord's, but every nuance is in its place and every run is letter-perfect. Yet Holcman regards tape recording with a jaundiced eye. "Before the advent of tape, recordings were at least authentic," he says. "An artist could record a side several times, but no engineer could falsify the performance by splicing several sections together. Nowadays you can record a difficult piece on the installment plan; a pianist can overwhelm us with virtuosity which doesn't really exist at any one playing. Tape may be economical and efficient, but it has robbed the record of its value as a historical document." Be it ever so scratchy, there's nothing like an old Hofmann.

The Spirit of 78

By R. PETER MUNVES

Not every record collector these days is content with hi-fi—with the tingling triangles, the boomy bass, the ticking of the conductor's watch, popping flute keys, and the tuba player's breath. In increasing numbers they are rejecting the X-ray efficiency of the modern LP and joining the hunt for rare, out-of-print, low-fidelity 78rpm shellacs.

Connoisseurs, yawning with boredom over their collections of 2,000 LPs, are busily engaged in recapturing the adventure of the chase. Once again collecting has become a challenge to their ability to make shrewd trades and map out campaigns that will net them fabulous killings. The true collector is easily identified by the hypnotic gleam in his eyes when he discusses 78s and by the stoop in his walk (his posture suffers from carrying heavy loads of 78 albums). He is never without the standard equipment—an old catalogue or two, and a jeweler's eyepiece for groove inspection. He uses the international record journals to advertise his wants and trade lists all over the world. He and his fellows—the *cognoscenti collecti*—can be classified by several distinct species.

COLLECTUS NUMERALUS, commonly known as the numbers collector, is animated by a feverish passion for completeness. He wants to own all albums and singles, from the first to the latest, ever issued. His house turns into a miniature vault. If he is single he has no problems—except that as his collection grows he must rent larger quarters or practise sleeping in a standing position. If he is married his wife will soon find records in the linen closet and unless she is just as ardent a *collectus numeralus* as her husband (this is most unlikely) she will confront him with an "either/or" proposition. To keep his wife (should he decide in her favor), the *collectus numeralus* is forced either to (a) rent a warehouse, or (b) sell his collection. Since *collecti numerali* are always in debt, they usually choose the latter way out and are reduced to carrying a list of the records they used to own. Fraudulent *numerali* copy out numbers from catalogues and claim to own the discs they represent. This is representation without acquisition—a practice much frowned upon by all honest *numerali.*

COLLECTUS LABELUS. This species hunts records bearing first edition labels. He is an expert in identifying original-run labels. After carefully checking the amount of gold leaf used to stamp information on the label, and the texture, grain, and color of the paper, *collectus labelus* compares his find with a book of *bona fide* sample labels which he always carries with him. He is very suspicious of forgeries. Although he begins with Columbia and Victor, the sophisticated *labelus* soon branches out to such rarities as Vocalion, Polydor, Fonotipia, Zonophone, Brunswick, Heliodor, Lumen, SEMS, BAM, and others too numerous to list here. As the collection grows, *labelus* (like *numeralus*) runs into a space shortage and must either soak the labels off the records or break away the excess shellac around the label. This is bad for them.

COLLECTUS ACOUSTICUS yearns for the good old days, when records were records and ears had to be strained to hear them. He feels that the acoustic process, the oldest method of disc recording, has never been surpassed by the electric and electronic techniques introduced in the mid-Twenties. He likes to visualize the singers who made acousticals, as they bellowed and strutted in front of the recording horns. He collects only genuine acoustics (no modern re-issues), which give off more noise than music. As long as a high hiss is steadily audible and the opera stars sound as though they were getting a hot-foot, the discs are guaranteed genuine. A giveaway characteristic of the *collectus acousticus*: the shape of his ears resembles the speaker horns of early acoustic phonographs.

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Etude on Etudes . . . *The "Mikrokosmos" of Béla Bartók*

By ABRAM CHASINS

IF IT HAS not yet been done, "The History of Etude-writing for the Piano" should provide stimulating rewards to an exploratory writer and provocative material to the reader. It would be a survey of the art of reconciling technique and esthetics, a catalogue and appraisal of music specifically devised to systematize, develop, and exhibit the resources of the piano and its players. The study could range from mere schematic examples such as Bach's own table of ornaments written for his infant son Wilhelm Friedemann to the inspired Partitas and Italian Concerto included among the group of masterpieces found under his incredibly modest title "Clavierübung." It could encompass the dry formulas of Hanon's Exercises and the poetic triumph of Chopin's Etudes. It would demonstrate that Schumann's "Symphonic Etudes" are primarily variations and only remotely etudes. The project would embrace the fascinating material in which Mozart, Brahms, Chopin, Liszt, Alkan, Scriabin, Moszkowski, Debussy, Rachmaninoff, and many other composers sought spontaneous artistic fulfilment, with varying degrees of success, through works that present explicit types of musical and pianistic problems.

Regardless of its plan, the quest would eventually lead to the "Mikrokosmos" of Béla Bartók, that remarkable collection of 153 progressive studies published in six volumes. Although the vast majority comprises elementary teaching material, most of them aim higher than providing a method for acquiring instrumental facility. Actually, they constitute a highly original introduction to contemporary idioms in general and Bartók's idiom in particular. The set takes the student from four-bar sketches in unison that take twenty seconds, through colorful little folk songs and dances, to five-page pieces of polytonal and polyrhythmic intricacies. Apart from the five-finger exercises, most of them have vitality and interest despite their essential economy of range and sonority. Some are beautiful in a strange way; others are harsh enough to make one wince; but they are all Bartók. Always there is the master craftsman at work, always the engaging spectacle of an uncompromising mind and spirit and human being.

Isidore Philipp tells a characteristic story. When the young Bartók first came to Paris the hospitable Philipp tried to be helpful. He asked Bartók if he would like to meet Saint-Saëns, the musical lion of the city. "No," said Bartók. "Would you perhaps like to meet Charles-Marie Widor?" asked Philipp. "No," answered Bartók. "Well," asked the would-be host, "Is there *anyone* you want to meet?" "Yes, Debussy," said Bartók. "Debussy?" exclaimed Philipp, "Why, he's a dreadful person, and terribly rude. Do you want to be insulted by Debussy?" "Yes," said Bartók.

Personally, Bartók was selective and remote. Artistically there was nothing he was not anxious to know, to probe, and to utilize. He used every influence before him and around him to create an entirely new and personal idiom. He was a fearless experimenter who never scorned the natural in a conscious effort to be "original." He had no determinable "isms." The crux of his method, if it can be described at all, is the absence of "method." His famed and untiring investigations into the genesis of Magyar folk music "typed" him unmercifully and set unjustified limits to his creative significance. Although he wrote no symphonies, I cannot think of another musical medium or form to which he did not contribute something significant.

It is undoubtedly the elemental force, the austerity, and sometimes even savagery of his rhythms and harmonies which have stamped Bartók as a "primitive." Certainly these traits are strongly revealed in his piano music, for Bartók had a vertical view of the piano as a primarily percussive instrument. Not that he did not know and occasionally exploit the full lyrical possibilities of the instrument. He was a superb concert pianist who emerged from the Rubinstein Competition some fifty years ago as second only to Wilhelm Backhaus.

Bartók's compositional life followed a familiar pattern: early struggle, eventual artistic recognition, but throughout a scarcity of performances and no financial security. Real success and representation came to Bartók's music immediately following his death.

—*Bettmann Archive.*

Béla Bartók at thirty (Budapest, 1911).

Columbia has just issued the entire "Mikrokosmos" in a three-record LP volume (SL-229, $11.94) performed by Bartók's compatriot, pupil, and friend, Gyorgy Sandor. His sure-handed and robust performances complete a worthy task, further enhanced by an accompanying brochure by Dr. J. F. Kilpatrick in association with Sandor. It is an admirable piece of work, complete with comments, photographs, and valuable documentations.

SANDOR manages to endow most of these miniatures with artistic attributes, although it is hard to estimate the playing of Books One and Two from an interpretative point of view. Piquant as they are, one is on elementary ground and there isn't much to hear or to work on. But Mr. Sandor handles the problem admirably, with rhythmic solidity, tonal differentiation, tasteful shading, and

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discreet pedalling. In such works as "In Hungarian Style" and "Contrary Motion" for two-pianos, he performs both parts through re-recording and makes an impressive "team" with an impeccable ensemble.

Book Three is more advanced and more interesting in every way. In the pieces with vocal parts and words such as "Hungarian Song" and "Song of the Fox," the song-line is effectively re-recorded by Sandor on the piano. Book Four is bleak Bartók. Only sternly dedicated disciples could find much emotional appeal in its austere angularity, bitter harmonies, and steely rhythms. The same is true of much in Book Five, with two especially ingratiating exceptions, the "New Hungarian Folk Song" and "Bagpipe." The rest is pretty tough and tiresome going except for the most ardent Bartókians.

In Book Six we find many works obviously intended for performance, and they provide the best opportunities to observe Sandor's approach to Bartók on every level. In the Six Bulgarian Dances he displays rhythmic drive and steadiness, sophistication and technical excellence throughout. In the "Ostinato," "Divided Arpeggios," "Syncopation," and the famous "From the Diary of a Fly," he utilizes their numerous and ingenious devices to accomplish his best playing. What emerges most forcefully are Sandor's flair for this music and his complete conviction about it. What one mainly misses are accentual variety and coloristic nuance, the imaginative sensitivity to match his authority.

THE rhythmic and dramatic accents of Bartók's compositions have led some of his best known interpreters into metrical excesses and dynamic violence which conceal their lyricism, deprive them of refinement and distinction. After a bit, everything begins to sound alike. The "Mikrokosmos" is truly a small cosmos, but it contains the gamut of elements to be found in a universe, no matter how small. It therefore provides the pianist with many opportunities to "sing," to balance its rhythmic and harmonic aspects and to distribute throughout this luxuriant tumult an overall expressiveness.

Although few of these works make formidable virtuosic demands, they pose every other problem of musicianship. Sandor has met most of them with distinction and artistic integrity. We are indebted to him for taking the heretofore untraveled road and for presenting the entire "Mikrokosmos" as a collection of significant and vigorous creations, not as an archeological expedition.

On the Opera Frontier

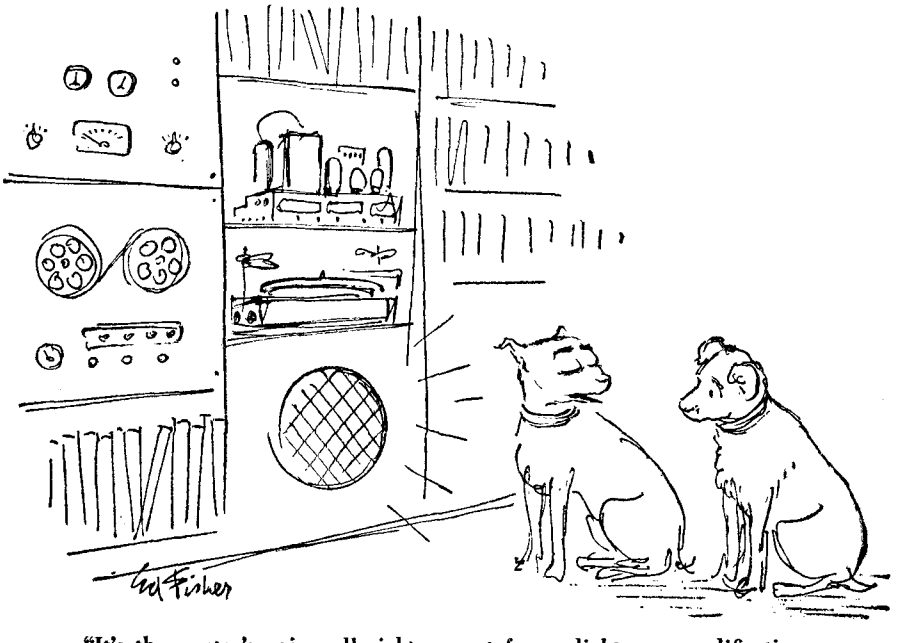
By HERBERT WEINSTOCK

AT THE edge of the world of opera stretches an ill-defined, only partially explored buffer territory. There, not protected by musicologists or thoroughly hunted by recording microphones, but very often honored by popular favor, live light opera, operetta, the *zarzuela*, musical plays composed for performance by schoolchildren and other amateurs, and a dozen other mixed races of not-quite operas. From the editor of "Recordings," for example, I have received a "complete" recording of Karl Millöcker's operetta "The Beggar Student" ("Der Bettelstudent"), one of Kurt Weill's "Der Jasager," and one of Amadeo Vives's "Maruxa." To enjoy them, or some of them—at least in parts—is far simpler than to categorize or place them in the hierarchy of the lyric stage.

"The Beggar Student" (Vanguard VRS-474/5, $9.96), is stylishly sung and played by a cast of soloists headed by Wilma Lipp (Laura), Rudolf Christ (the Beggar Student), Rosette Anday (Palmatica), and Kurt Preger (Ollendorf), with the Chorus and Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera, and conducted by Anton Paulik. I suppose that this brightly jaunty recording will have great appeal to those who have old and fond memories of "The Beggar Student." Having none, I find the music so monotonous, so exactly what I expect it to be, as to be crushing.

Stamped throughout with the unmistakable impress of Kurt Weill's musical manner of the 1920s and early 1930s is "Der Jasager" (The Yes-Sayer), a two-act opera to a text by Bert Brecht based on an ancient Japanese *noh*-play. Recorded under the supervision of Weill's widow, Lotte Lenya Weill-Davis, the recorded version (MGM E-3270, $3.98) is performed by a mixture of adults and children (alternatively it can be sung entirely by children). The leading role, that of a high-minded schoolboy who bravely submits to ritual death, is sung astonishingly well by a twelve-year-old soprano named Josef Protschka.

Amadeo Vives (1871-1932) was one of the successful modern Spanish composers of the *zarzuela* and related genres. His "Maruxa," to a text by Luis Pascual Frutos, is a *comedia lírica* in two acts. Dating from 1914, it is a lyric paean to the simple life of the shepherds of the seacoast of Galicia. As excerpted in this recording (London International TW-91017/8, $9.96) by the Cantores de Madrid, the Orquesta de Cámara de Madrid, and a cast of practiced soloists headed by Toñy Rosado, Pilar Lorengar, and Manuel Ausensi—under the vivid direction of Ataúlfo Argenta —"Maruxa" altogether lacks the musical individuality of the best *zarzuelas* of Bretón, Chapí, and Usandizaga.



"It's the master's voice, all right, except for a slight overamplification of the treble and some minor distortion in the first half-dozen grooves."

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SPRING IN PRAGUE

Nathan Rachlin.

—Sovfoto.

By VICTOR SEROFF

THE Prague Spring Music Festival had two features that distinguished it from the rest of the European festivals: the first one hit your pocketbook, the second your eye. I am not an economist and it is none of my business, but I am sure that it would take a wizard to figure out how the Czechs expect foreigners to attend their Festival as long as the exchange of foreign money for Czech currency remains so low. When your dollar's purchasing power is reduced to twenty-five cents, or in some cases even less, it becomes a tough proposition for a visitor to last through the three and a half weeks of the Festival (May 11-June 3). That may be one of the reasons why there were so few foreigners in the audiences. The Czechs said that they realize this and that they are going to do something to improve the situation. I sincerely hope so, for the second feature of their enterprise is worthy of note.

During the years immediately following the last war (1946-47-48) the Prague Festival was a sort of a door through which passed Soviet artists now well known to us. Here for the first time I heard David Oistrakh, Emil Gilels, and Dmitri Shostakovich on one of the rare occasions when he appeared in a concert as a pianist. On the other hand, the Russian, Polish, and Czech artists had their first opportunity to hear and to meet their confrères from France, England, and the United States: Charles Munch, Nicole Henriot, Ginette Neveu, Leonard Bernstein, Eugene List, and Samuel Barber among others. These were truly international meetings. Then, after 1948, the Festival ceased to be international, at least as far as we were concerned, and only this summer, following the recently adopted new attitude "It's time for a change," the Czechs have succeeded in programming artists representing France, Belgium, Yugoslavia, Hungary, Romania, Soviet Russia, the United States, and both East and West Germany. Perhaps the absence of large groups of foreigners that usually fill the concert halls of other European festivals was responsible for the noticeable lack of a festive atmosphere. The Festival opened with a performance of Smetana's "My Country." It is a patriotic suite well befitting the event, but there were no speeches to celebrate the occasion—it was all quite businesslike. People arriving on slowly moving streetcars from all over Prague rushed to their seats in the hall, quietly listened to the concert, and then rushed to catch their tramcars home.

After attending several concerts featuring Czech artists and Czech compositions I was left with the impression that the Czechs were far more interested in their foreign guests. This was obvious from the way they packed the halls to hear Nathan Rachlin, the USSR conductor; Igor Oistrakh, David Oistrakh's son; Monique de la Bruchollerie, the French pianist; and Julius Katchen from the United States. The Czechs love to applaud, and in Katchen's case so much enthusiasm was generated by the steadily growing goodwill toward the West, and by the first appearance of an American artist after many years, that he received an ovation lasting for about fifteen minutes.

Probably the most interesting event of the Festival was the East Berlin Comic Opera Company's production of Richard Strauss's "Die schweigsame Frau ("The Silent Woman"). Strauss was in his seventies when he composed the opera (1935) based on Ben Jonson's comedy, "Epicene, or The Silent Woman." The late Stefan Zweig wrote the libretto, and it created a *cause celèbre* in Germany where the Nazis were busily introducing their New Order. After four performances conducted by Karl Böhm in Dresden in 1935 the opera was forbidden, because Strauss refused to have Zweig's name (Zweig was a Jew) removed from the program. Later the old Richard wrote a letter to Zweig asking him to collaborate with him on still another opera. He assured Zweig that in a couple of years the Nazis would be out. This letter was caught by the censor and Strauss was forced to resign his position as the General Music Director of Germany. Meanwhile the authorities successfully silenced his "Silent Woman."

In 1952 it was resurrected by the East Berlin Comic Opera with the production which they brought to Prague. It is a charming, witty piece written in the *opéra-bouffe* style, with a very simple plot. A rich old man who is allergic to noise wants to marry a silent woman, but in the end he learns to his relief rather than sorrow that there is no such woman. The music sparkles with virtuosity, but it also has delightful lyrical moments, and the Berlin company conducted by Meinhard von Zallinger gave a superb performance staged by Walter Felsenstein. Speaking of operas, I must say that I found Dvořák's opera "The Devil and Katcha" as given at the Smetana Theatre in Prague perfectly delightful. Jan Konstantin, the Czech baritone from the National Theatre, belongs to the genre of experienced artists who move about the stage as though it were their home. His Devil had more charm than deviltry, but somehow it suited the old fairytale. Incidentally, I understand that the late Feodor Chaliapin wanted to take Konstantin on a tour to sing Sancho Panza in his "Don Quichotte," but the Russian singer died before this plan materialized.

In general, the interest of the Festival audiences was focused on the soloists. Personally, I was curious to hear Igor Oistrakh, whom I knew only through his records. The twenty-five-year-old Igor, who looks like his father but less stout, went through a taxing program (Franck's, Bach's, and Prokofiev's sonatas plus Saint-Saëns's "Rondo Capriccioso" and a number of encores) with the ease of an experienced artist. He has a splendid technique and a firm tone and there is a lot of *elan* in his playing, and yet I was a little disappointed. Ginzburg, his accompanist, who is just as young as Oistrakh, stole the show in the Franck sonata. Igor only at times played as well as he does on his records. To say that he can rival his father is sheer nonsense, at least at this stage. From my talks with the Czech musicians I learned that Igor has other rivals, let alone his father. Several other Russian violinists about his age are supposedly better.

In the United States we rarely hear much about Russian conductors. In

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Prague in 1946 I heard Eugene Mravinsky of the Leningrad Symphony Orchestra, whom I could not rank among the great conductors. I was no more overwhelmed by Nathan Rachlin's performance at this year's festival, though he is rated as one of the best Soviet conductors. A professor at the Kiev Conservatory and permanent conductor of the National Symphonic Orchestra of the Ukraine Republic, the small, stocky, fifty-year-old Rachlin looks as if he were made of stone. In an interview published on his arrival he promised to give an authentic performance of Tchaikovsky's Sixth without any "embellishments." At his concert, however, I did not hear anything new; what did emerge was an uneven reading of the score. The Prague Philharmonic is as good as most major European orchestras, and yet Rachlin treated it like a provincial band. He worked unnecessarily hard, showing the men (or the audience, I think) every single phrase and in all its nuances. He worked himself up to such a frenzy that at one point he looked as though he were about to take off and fly over the heads of musicians. For some reason (perhaps he had tired himself out) he did better with Khachaturian's Second Symphony, a work written in a vein similar to Shostakovich's "Leningrad" Symphony, with a great deal of brass and cymbals that neither added anything nor brought a final end when you expected it. But the audience loved him.

George Szell, the second musician to represent the United States at this Festival, was unable to attend because of an operation he had to undergo while in Switzerland. It would have been very interesting to compare these two schools of conducting. Instead, we were offered Svyatoslav Richter, a Soviet pianist, in a recital devoted to four Mozart sonatas. I have never heard his records, but I had heard of him—some said that they prefer him to Gilels, who is considered here one of the best pianists in the world. They said Richter is more romantic. That he is, and certainly in his appearance. The forty-one-year-old, blond, balding Richter with soft, "dreamy" eyes plays with good taste, avoids exaggerations, and is at his best in slow movements with singing *cantilena*. His runs are even, but nothing sparkles in his playing and his bravura is forced. Thus, on the whole he is as different from Gilels as a lake is from a stormy sea. Although he frequently complains about his health —"nerves," they say—on the stage he seemed completely at ease. To have something wrong with your nerves here is considered an everyday occurrence and nothing to worry about.

Vices and Voices

By MARIE CHAY

MY GRANDMOTHER enjoys as much as anybody the tantalizing bits about the private lives of famous people, especially singers, but only if they are "foreigners." Then she revels in it, and the more she hears about what she calls their scurrilous lives, the better she likes it.

Schumann-Heink, in her lifetime, gave my grandmother many pleasant moments, proving besides what she had always known that Slavs, which to my grandmother is anyone not a Latin or Anglo, are even farther down on her scale than Americans or the British.

Geraldine Farrar also did more than her share to make my grandmother happy, but Mary Garden was a shirker and so irked my grandmother tremendously because of her discretion. "Imagine being so selfish as to keep things to herself instead of having them in the papers so Luisa can read about them!" my grandfather observed.

Grandmother never bothers about comparing the voices of Italian singers of opera and their "foreign" counterparts. She already knows that the one can and the other can't sing. The thing that makes the first even more holy is their well-bleached private lives.

My grandmother also goes a lot on looks, if it suits her. Therefore, what can a man with a face and silver hair like Martinelli be but pure, being an Italian? "A veritable angel," my grandmother insists, while of a London, a Bampton, or a Miller she would expect anything and be disappointed if the "anything" wasn't justified by the facts.

Actually, my grandmother resents any "foreign" singers who live blameless lives. That, to her, is only the privilege of Italians. But then so few of these outsiders do, she is pleased to believe.

To my grandmother, the ideal life for anyone is one wife or husband per person, with the wife five years younger. "He needs the wisdom of years in order to guide her," is her explanation for this. Once married, there is to be no straying on either side, and the gaze of each is to be fixed forevermore either on the partner or on the children. Naturally there will be children. Otherwise what is the point of marriage? If one of the spouses dies, then it's the end for the remaining one. "Ah, la forsa dal desting," she says in a quavering voice. God gave him one spouse, and having used that up he is not entitled to another. The survivor will then be a circumspect widow or widower the rest of his or her days, interested only in the children. My grandmother doesn't go so far as to advocate thrusting oneself on a funeral pyre, but the celibate existence she urges might just as well be that. Almost the only difference is that in one the victim is still alive.

Since Italian artists are naturally made of better materials than mere laymen of that nationality, they are, then, more subject to my grandmother's law. Francesco Tamagno, if he wasn't the pure lily my grandmother insisted a Piedmontese—from Turin itself at that—couldn't help but be, she, fortunately for her family, never found it out.

"Or didn't want to," my grandfather suggests.

Once, when Duse and D'Annunzio were in the news, my grandfather mentioned them casually. This was one of the few times when my grandmother almost didn't know what to say, since the evidence was all against her, but even then she wasn't exactly destitute of words.

"What can you expect of one who was forced to live for so long with

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those robbers and brigands in Trieste?" she asked. "He did what he could for us, he guarded the Fiume, but it destroyed him."

My grandmother is rabid on the question of Trieste, and to hear her tell it Gabriele D'Annunzio straddled the River Fiume grimly for the fifteen months or so he protected it and singlehandedly repulsed the enemy.

"True," my grandfather agreed. "but what about Eleanora? She wasn't involved with those. . . ."

"Those Slavs," my grandmother supplied for him. "Thieves and assassins, nothing but that, to give them their right names." With that she went "Fiuming away," as my grandfather used to say, and soon left the Duse-D'Annunzio alliance far behind.

Although it would seem that with Giuseppi Verdi's life my grandmother would have a hard time of it, she doesn't at all. "Ah, that poor, poor miserable *creatura!*" she says if someone brings up his private life, or she sees something about it in print. "Would you be sane after your wife and two children were wrenched from your very hands?" To this, there isn't much of an answer. If someone is daring or truthful enough to remind her that Verdi lived with a mistress for some years, my grandmother immediately brings up Gaetana Donizetti and his Virginia Vasselli.

"Like two doves," my grandmother says in a tremulous voice. "If it hadn't been for that terrible cholera, that plague, that year, they would be together yet."

"They'd be over 100," my grandfather says, knowing that to correct her is useless. "Besides, what has that to do with Verdi?"

My grandmother, however, doesn't hear a thing and goes on and on about the virtuous pair.

With modern singers, my grandmother still applies the same rules, perhaps even more rigidly since the people are younger and so, naturally, one needs to be more strict with them. She approves highly of Licia Albanese and the reports on her home life.

"Ah, there's a woman now!" she tells anyone who cares to listen. "A husband she looks after—an Italian one too," she adds, looking at the grandchildren who married "foreigners" and so beneath them, should they happen to be near. "A child she brings up herself—that's as it should be." Licia Albanese just barely misses a perfect score because she has only one child, a flaw she can easily remedy and so move to the very top of my grandmother's list.

My grandmother pictures Albanese as getting up at six to do the family laundry, ironing, cleaning, cooking, and dishes, as well as washing the diapers and making up the formulas when that was necessary, and then going virtuously—"How else after that?" my grandfather wants to know—to bed at ten o'clock. This, in my grandmother's mind picture of her, goes on six days a week with Sundays off for church and rest.

A few weeks ago when Albanese appeared in a production of "La Traviata" with a Denver opera group, my grandmother became quite concerned for the welfare of her husband and child. "I hope she had them with her," she said, not sure whether, even so, she approved of this breaking of routine. Her agile imagination soon took over and made things right. "Oh, of course!" she said, relieved. "They were here on vacation!"

When Albanese's child gets to about the second grade in school, which my grandmother considers to be going to school in earnest, she will not tolerate any more such off-beat vacations.

WITH Frank Guarrera and any other married male (Italian) singer, my grandmother sees the same home picture as that of Albanese, except that they go off to work instead of working at home as she does.

"When do they sing?" my grandfather asked her once when she had been on this subject for longer than even his patient nature could stand.

My grandmother was surprised at the question and didn't know. For the men, she had made no more provisions for their singing than she had for Albanese. All she was interested in was the blameless life which, to her, because of its simple goodness, is what produces great singing.

Once one of my cousins, thinking to make my grandmother feel more kindly towards American singers, brought up the names of Jerome Hines and Richard Tucker, both family men.

"They're Americans, aren't they?" my grandmother said in a cold disdainful way. The implication was that behind that so-called façade of the kindly father of a family lurked two of the most depraved *creaturas* in opera, either on or off the stage.

My grandmother listens with no great interest to male Italian singers who are single, and she never thinks much of their voices until they get properly married.

Italian women singers who are single get even less consideration from her, but as soon as they marry an Italian husband five years older than they are, have a family, and follow the strict regime such as she imposes on Albanese she will allow them to come into her circle. The only trouble is that by then they will probably no longer be able to sing.

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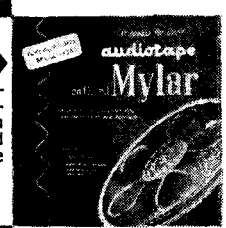

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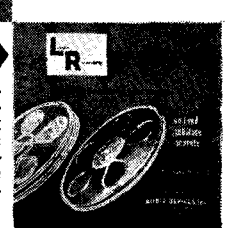

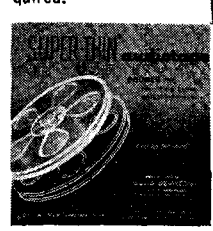

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Recordings in Review

The Human Schumann

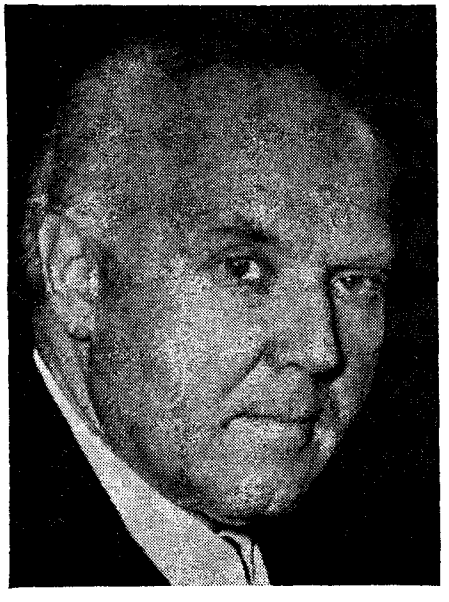
SCHUMANN: *"Etudes Symphoniques," "Kinderscenen." Paul Badura-Skoda, piano.* Westminster WN-18138, $4.98.

THE DEVELOPMENT of this fine young artist proceeds apace, as his statement of the theme here and the succeeding few variations welcomely attest. Just as we are anticipating a wholly pleasurable experience, however, scholarship raises its ugly head and contentment gives way to confusion. Not willing to proceed with his valuably expressive opinions on the text as it stands in the familiar Breitkopf and Härtel edition (as revised in 1852 by Schumann himself), Badura-Skoda has put together a sequence of his own which does not suit the situation.

In addition to composing the variations as they stand, Schumann wrote five others which appear in an appendix to his complete works. As he did not see fit to include them in an edition he worked over nearly twenty years after the music was composed in 1834 it seems gratuitous for Badura to intrude it into the sequence. For one thing, he has to make his own decision where the unfamiliar variations fit in; for another, he imposes a personal whim on a listener quite content with the work as Schumann left it.

One or two of the added variations are unquestionably of high musical quality, but it seems to me that if Badura-Skoda was bent on communicating them to the public he would have been better advised to give them a separate space on the disc rather than working them into the existing sequence.

Fortunately, he has not undertaken any such wilful revision of the "Kinderscenen," which are played with simplicity, charm, and a degree of human warmth highly appropriate to the composer. That valuable commodity is much more a rarity today than technical facility, but Badura-Skoda has ample command of the keyboard—also the pedal—for the needs of this music. Excellent piano reproduction.



Gieseking—"this IS Ravel."

Karajan's No. 9, No. 2

BEETHOVEN: *Symphonies Nos. 8 and 9. Herbert van Karajan conducting the Philharmonic Orchestra, with the chorus of the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde and Elizabeth Schwarzkopf, soprano, Marga Höffgen, alto, Ernst Häfliger, tenor, and Otto Edelmann, bass-baritone.* Angel 3544, $9.96.

AS THOSE WITH a reasonable indoctrination in record lore are aware, one of Karajan's earliest impacts on the musical scene was via a recording of the Ninth nearly a decade ago. It had more than a fair share of musical merit, but was contaminated by that long-familiar bane of music making in Vienna's Musikverein: echo and constriction. Well, he has decided to remake the Ninth and gone to Vienna to do it, with the result that the sound again suffers from the Vienna muffles. Echo isn't so much a factor these days (a clever engineer can control it), but the sense of a throttled orchestra, blurry inner voices, and a lack of definition in the choral work is.

That we have, thereby, been deprived of an irreplaceable experience is not my contention. Karajan's Ninth is well considered, it is knowing and thoroughly experienced, so far as the projection of most musical details is concerned, but it lacks the brooding mood needed for the first movement or the thunderous jubilation of the second. The Philharmonia strings make a very beautiful sound in the Vienna surroundings in the slow movement, and the superb chorus (no doubt the reason for doing the job where it was done) is quite in a class by itself where the finale is concerned. With impeccable reproduction, something of rather impressive impact might have emerged. But this consequence doesn't please my ear. The solo quartet does its work capably, though Edelmann's sound is not the imposing one wanted for the first announcement of "O Freunde." Schwarzkopf is quite outstanding, as she was in the earlier collaboration with Karajan.

The accompanying Eighth is in many ways the best performance of a Beethoven symphony Karajan has yet offered: powerfully rhythmic, well-controlled throughout (even to a slightly too deliberate pace in the "trio" of the menuet), and beautifully executed by the orchestra. It also suffers from the prevailing mode of reproduction, especially in the excess prominence of the tympani.

Ravel's Bell Well Rung

RAVEL: *Complete Piano Works. Walter Gieseking, piano.* Angel 3541, $12.98.

AS PURVEYORS OF pleasure, the entrepreneurs of Angel records have attained so remarkable a level of consistency that the appearance of any new major project—whether it is a "Merry Widow," "Ariadne," or a violin concerto by Oistrakh—causes one to salivate aurally, *à la* Dr. Pavlov's dog when the bell was rung. However phrased, Angel has rung our aural bell again with this handsomely conceived, handsomely executed tribute to Maurice Ravel.

As might be expected from a project carried out in France, the inserted brochure of a dozen pages is a work of love and art, with Jacques de Lacretelle writing his memoirs of the composer, Emile Vuillermoz discoursing on the piano music, Gieseking himself commenting on problems of performance, and Maurice Delage discussing the music of Ravel generally. Interspersed are some of the finest Ravel pictures and autographs one could wish, including the composer's own sketch for the title page of "Tombeau de Couperin."

All this, however, is but icing on the tasty dish of French pastry chef Gieseking has prepared. To speak of a "clinging performance" is usually to imply a demerit, denoting a little more adhesion in the treatment than can be readily absorbed. Here, however, every performance really clings to the memory, in a demonstration of muscular finesse, intellectual penetration, and emotional identification that transcends what is commonly called interpretation. I admire the Casadesus way with Ravel, and there are others who play one or another works famously. But, whether it is the intimacy of "Pavane pour une Infante défunte" or the intricacies of "Gaspard de la Nuit" this IS Ravel speaking to us. I

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recall an occasion when Gieseking played the C minor, Op. 111, of Beethoven so compellingly that one had to admire it even if one didn't like it. Here the compulsion levels all barriers, leaving us awash on a sea of aural pleasure.

There are, along the way, minor deviations from the abiding excellence, but nothing to mar the totality. On the other hand, there are a couple of unexpected pleasures, among them the witty piece titled "A la manière de Chabrier," in which a theme of Gounod is artfully colored to suit the satiric purpose. This, incidentally, Gieseking does with a deftness of touch to leave no doubt of his awareness of all implications.

In his own brief but absorbing comment, Gieseking says: "Ravel's piano compositions can be called the most perfectly engineered music for the piano" (adding, of course "not engineered or constructed in a purely mechanical way"). Though he doesn't pursue the analogy further, it may be noted that Gieseking has provided the elbow grease, the midnight oil, and the lubrications of the spirit to set them all purring, rippling, and revolving.

Shostakovitch, True and False

SHOSTAKOVITCH: *Symphony No. 10. Karen Ancerl conducting the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra.* Decca DL-9822, $3.98.
"The Composer" conducting the National Philharmonic Orchestra. Colosseum CRLP-173, $3.98.

A NEW NOTE in the discordant babble of who didn't sing what in Wagner or Strauss, or whose performance of Verdi is being hawked under somebody else's name, is provided by this version of the Shostakovich No. 10 bearing the composer's name as conductor. We are blandly informed that "the present performance of the work, with Shostakovitch leading the National Philharmonic Orchestra, dates from the approximate period of the meetings (March 29 and 30, and April 5) in the Central Clubhouse of Composers in Moscow" (1954).

Against this must be offered the word of Shostakovitch relayed through the Leeds Music Company, agents in America for tapes from Russia, that he has never conducted the work anywhere, least of all has he ever conducted it for a recording. Hence, whatever else it is, it is NOT what Colosseum says it is. Whether it is an appropriation of the performance by Mravinsky issued here by Concert Hall I could scarcely say; but the indications point to that. Those who love irony will note that Colosseum claims

Fiedler—"picaresque and cashmere."

a "copyright" under all the conventions available to it. Along with other deceits, it foists on the public the beginning of a new kind of "tradition"; an interpretation by a composer who didn't do the interpreting.

Ancerl's excellent version is quite another thing: a well-done supplement to the best existing version (by Mitropoulos on Columbia) in which the scheme of performance is plainly along different lines, especially in the delineation of texture as Shostakovitch conceives it. It moves steadily to its climaxes and the playing of the fine orchestra is powerfully reproduced, if with less clarity and brilliance than the score contains.

Chausson by Kolassi

CHAUSSON: *"Poeme de l'Amour et de la Mer." Irma Kolassi, mezzo soprano, with the London Philharmonic conducted by Louis de Froment.* London LL-1386, $3.98.

THE PROVERBIAL everybody knows that Chausson's "Le temps des lilas" is one of the most beautiful songs in the French literature, but how many know it was originally written for voice and orchestra, as part of a lengthy cycle? That is an incidental disclosure of this excellent version which comes along, providentially, as the older one by Gladys Swarthout and Pierre Monteux is marked for deletion.

The familiar theme of "Le temps des lilas" steals in quietly at the beginning of side II, whose title is "La Mort d'Amour." The setting of the poem by Maurice Boucher proceeds along other musical lines for a while, rising to an ecstatic, somewhat "Tristanish" climax in the strings and woodwinds before the stanzas beginning "Le temps des lilas et les temps des roses" are reached. What follows is the music familiarly known from song programs, introduced by cellos and violas, then taken up by the voice. It is superbly delivered by Kolassi, against a warmly atmospheric background from the orchestra well conducted by de Froment.

Side I (titled "La Fleur des Eaux") is also a hymn to the potent fragrance of the lilac, beginning "L'Air est plein d'une odeur exquise de lilas." It doesn't contain musical material quite so striking as side II, but it develops a line of musical thought suggestive of Debussy's "La Damoiselle Elue" to come. It, too, is sensitively formed by the Kolassi voice, which profits much from an ideal sound frame and perfect registration by the London engineers. A record, in short, of outstanding interest as well as quality.

Vox "Pops"

STRAUSS, J.: *"Village Swallows Waltz," etc. Boston Pops Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler.* RCA Victor LM-1985, $3.98.

THERE COMES a time in every music lover's life when all he wants to hear is Ketelby's "In a Persian Market," complete with the vocal effects in orchestra, and I can recommend, without qualification, the new one on this RCA disc as definitive. In addition to the necessary picaresque quality in the timpani, it has a cashmere smoothness rarely encountered in string playing. If we had badges and knighthoods in this country, this alone would entitle Fiedler to be addressed as Sir Arthur; failing that, we wish him many happy royalties.

The disc (entitled "Pops Picnic," though I haven't yet seen a lunch-basket with a built-in record player) is otherwise devoted largely to those matters which have made *vox pops, vox dei* in Boston: Gade's "Jalousie," Leroy Anderson's "Waltzing Cat," Ivanovici's "Danube Waves" (known in some circles as "The Anniversary Waltz"), Lecuona's "Malagueña," and for exit purposes von Suppé's "Poet and Peasant" overture. Mixed in are Jack Mason's "Pops Polka" and "Enchanted Sea." If the latter are good enough for Fiedler, they are good enough for me.

RCA has spared no decibels to make this collection of toe tappers as provocative as possible, with a fine overall pickup that makes you part of the Symphony Hall atmosphere. "Poet and Peasant" is outstanding in this respect, but the quality is high throughout.

—IRVING KOLODIN.

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Recordings Report I: Orchestral LPs

WORK, PERFORMER, DATA	REPORT
Alfvén: "Midsummer Vigil," "Mountain King." The composer conducting the Royal Swedish Orchestra. Rangström: "Divertimento Elegiaco." King Eric Songs. Stig Westerberg conducting with Erik Saeden, baritone. Westminster WN 18131, $4.98.	An absorbing introduction to Westminster's sponsorship here of the Swedish "Discofil" products, especially for Alfvén's meaningful direction of the full "Midsummer Vigil." This turns out to be a much more consequential piece than the abridgement, featuring the jaunty "pointing dance," had led one to believe. The later (1923) "Mountain King" is along more Straussian lines. The Rangström songs are in a Mahlerish vien, but with individuality nevertheless. I cannot say much for the string "Divertimento." Excellent performances, well reproduced.
Bach, J. C: Sinfonias in B flat and D major. Bach, C. P. E: Sinfonia in C, Bach, W.F: Sinfonia in D minor. Concert Hall Society CHS 1251, $3.98.	The wide range of musical expression in vogue in the last half of the eighteenth century is aptly illustrated by these works of Bach's talented offsprings. In addition to the fairly familiar sinfonia in B flat, we are offered another attractive work in D, a powerful sinfonia of Wilhelm Friedemann (recalling the *Sturm and Drang* period of Haydn's symphonies) and a typically solid, contrapuntally intricate work by Carl Philipp. Maurits van den Berg, a Dutch musician based at Hilversum, delivers all with a powerful sense of suitable style, also well-considered phrasing. Good reproduction.
Bach: Brandenburg Concertos No. 2 and No. 3. Hans von Benda conducting the Berlin Chamber Orchestra. Telefunken LGX 66012, $4.98.	There is ample musical method but little emotional "madness" in these performances. They unwind smoothly, like thread from a spool, but not all the knotty places have been worked out. For another deficiency, the prominent solo trumpet in No. 2 and its flute counterpart in No. 5 are inferior to the best in other versions. Fairly good sound.
Brahms: Symphony No. 3, "Tragic" and "Academic Festival" overtures. Antal Dorati conducting the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra. Mercury MG 50072, $4.98.	Dorati is not the first conductor to be balked by the involutions of the "Tragic" overture, but the "Academic Festival" is strongly played, the symphony provided with a vigor and rhythmic propulsion that carry it along impressively. However, Dorati's fondness for tympani outbursts are not endearing in a work of this character. "Big" recording.
Fibich: "Poème," Haydn: "Serenade" (Quartet in F, op. 3, No. 2) etc. Cedric Dumont and the Boyd Neel Orchestra. Epic LC 3228, $3.98.	Even if this disc is not just what it professes to be ("Serenades for Strings" is hardly a big enough blanket to cover Bach's air from the suite in D and Handel's "Ombra mai fui") it is an example of mood music in which the listener's attention is wooed not wheedled. Even in such matters as the "Meditation" from "Thais" and "Greensleeves" as well as three movements from Tchaikovsky's "Serenade" in C, Dumont manages to be non-maudlin, which marks him for future attention. The strings play superbly and the reproduction is first-class.
Grieg: Concerto in A minor. Rachmaninoff: "Rhapsody on a theme by Paganini." Abbey Simon, piano, with the Hague Philharmonic conducted by Willem Van Otterloo. Epic LC 3182, $3.98.	A creditable effort by Simon, the young American pianist who has found a welcome in Europe. Both works attest to his pianistic competence, but the kind of personal flair to make an impression in this well-worn literature is not evident. Nor, for that matter, is the kind of orchestral background we have come to take for granted in the best American and European recordings. The sound is not up to the Epic average.
Kodály: "Háry János" suite, Respighi: "Feste Romane." Arturo Toscanini conducting the NBC Symphony. RCA Victor LM 1973, $3.98.	A none-too-brilliant addition to the Toscanini catalogue, though the Kodály, dating from a broadcast of November 1947, is bitingly played. However, enhancement does not yield the kind of sound which is a *sine qua non* for music of this genre. The Respighi is much better, but it has previously been available on a ten inch disc. It boasts considerable volume, if not all the detail wanted.
Nielsen: "Sinfonia Expansiva" (No. 3). John Frandsen conducting the Danish National Orchestra, with Ruth Guldbaek, soprano, and Erik Sjoberg, baritone. Epic LC 3225, $3.98.	Although it is only a few years since Nielsen was unknown in this country, he has now attained the status reserved for the elite—duplication of a major work. This performance of the "Expansiva" seems to fulfil the implications of its title better than the previous one by Tuxten, both soloists are excellent (they participate in the *andante pastorale*), and the technical work is first class. A very good introduction to Nielsen for those who have not already had the pleasure.
Schumann: Symphony No. 2 in C. Paul Paray conducting the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. Mercury MG 50102, $4.98.	Another stunning service on behalf of Schumann by Paray and his fine orchestra, whose Schumann No. 4 is one of the best on records. However, it cannot be held all-out superior to versions by Bernstein and Stokowski, both with substantial qualities of style and sound. Those who prefer their Schumann dynamic and non-cloying will find Paray's much to their taste. Very fine sound.
Strauss-Désormière: "Le Beau Danube." Jean Martinon conducting the London Philharmonic. London LL 1383, $3.98.	If circumstances do not permit Roger Désormière to conduct the work he originally scored for balletic use (the annotation gives credit also to Antal Dorati), Jean Martinon has ample command of its niceties. (Note however that Manuel Rosenthal has just done it for Capitol.) With the Martinon performance are a series of excerpts from Rossini's ballet music for "William Tell." The items are not specified. Bouyant sound.
Stravinsky: "Capriccio," Concerto for piano and wind instruments. Nikita Magaloff, piano, with Ernest Ansermet conducting the orchestra of the Suisse Romande. London LL 1392, $3.98.	Ansermet's elucidiation (which, in this instance, really means to "make lucid") of the orchestral scores and Magaloff's easy, dextrous treatment of the piano result in a clarity of sound, a penetration of detail not often heard in this music. In a way, it is as well, for the stronger the light, the more evidently transparent are the structures involved. The "Capriccio" survives best, having a measure of spirit (especially in the finale) which piques interest. Fine recording.
Tchaikovsky: "Serenade in C," "Mozartiana." Paul van Kempen conducting the Lamoureux Orchestra of Paris. Epic LC 3213, $3.98.	Well-phrased performances by van Kempen, whose Tchaikovsky more likely than not is discerning and unexaggerated. The quality of sound is not what he has given us previously with the Concertgebouw or Berlin Philharmonic Orchestras, a dryness in the strings especially to be attributed to the Parisian players and their acoustical surroundings. Good but not exceptional reproduction. —IRVING KOLODIN.

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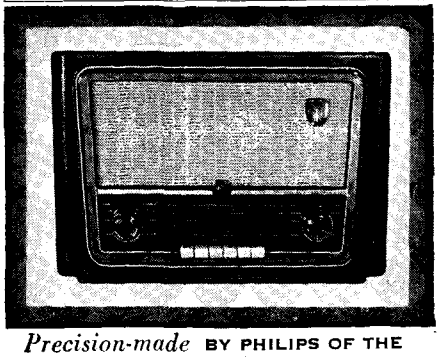

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WEST COAST REPORT

Laszlo at Ojai

THE OJAI FESTIVAL, which annually tees off some sixty miles north of Los Angeles, celebrated its tenth anniversary season by devoting the weekend of May 25-26-27 to the performance of five chamber-music concerts. These were apportioned as usual between the tiny valley town's vest pocket auditorium and the rustic slopes of the civic park, the latter of which framed, as the culminating event, the rather less rustic configurations of Stravinsky's ballet cantata, "Les Noces," with the composer having his first go at conducting it in this country.

Of the festival's two points of interest, the other was the West Coast debut of the Hungarian soprano, Magda Laszlo, whose brunette beauty and obvious musical attainments made this not only a triumph for her personally, but went far toward invigorating a festival that was otherwise a bit on the flaccid side.

In her singing of Dallapiccola's twelve-tone setting of "Six Poems by Alcaeus and Two Lyrics of Anacreon," she turned a sure musical intelligence upon the terse, gemlike structure of music made singularly intense by the stern intellectual control of a natively lyric gift. Her voice, while not especially lustrous, is sweet, finely-textured and resilient, and its interest lies principally in the use she makes of it to register not so much a succession of lovely tones as a unified unfolding of the musical work itself. Her singing of Bach's "O holder Tag," under Robert Kraft, revealed a vocal temperament in every way disposed to bring his music triumphantly to life, through a rare fusion of dramatic imagery with musical acuity.

The first performance of Stravinsky's arrangement for instrumental ensemble and mixed chorus of Bach's chorale and canonic variations "Von Himmel Hoch," replaced the original organ sonorities with more fashionable timbres, utilizing six brasses to announce the hymn tune, and a vocal choir for its recurrence in the strict but tonally expanded variations.

Curiously enough, Stravinsky has saluted the spirit of Bach more aptly (if less intentionally) in his own "wedding" cantata, "Les Noces," whose own rhythmic vitality generates a not dissimilar sense of urgency. In its festival hearing, which had Miss Laszlo as one of the vocal soloists, Stravinsky's concern for caesura and accent made for a detailed and explicit performance.

—MILDRED NORTON.

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Recordings Report II: Miscellaneous LPs

WORK, PERFORMER, DATA	REPORT
Bach: Cantatas Nos. 170 and 54, also "Agnus Dei" ("Mass in B minor"). Alfred Deller, counter-tenor, with the Leonhardt Baroque Ensemble. Vanguard BG 550, $4.98.	Whatever may be the purist's view of the suitability of Alfred Deller's counter-tenor voice to these works there are likely to be general music lovers who—like myself—find it more a demonstration of means than ends. That is, I greatly admire Deller's musicianship, but the unusual sound distracts attention from the work itself. The "Agnus Dei" attracts me most. Included in the ensemble are baroque versions of the conventional strings with a lighter, less penetrating quality. Fine sound.
Bartók: "Danzas Rumanas," Garrido: "Movimiento Perpetuo," Poncë: "Sonata Breve," etc. Pedro d'Andurain, violin, with Carlos Oxley, piano. Capitol P 18010, $3.98.	The young Chilean violinist plays this repertory with style and assurance, also a tone of uncommon sweetness if not great size. In addition to the items noted, the disc includes Enrique Soro's "Serenatella," Norman Fraser's "Cueca," Nin's "Granadina," Kreisler's version of the "Dance" from Falla's "Vida Breve," Kroll's "Banjo and Fiddle," "Kchachampa" by Andres Sas, and a piece by Prokofieff needlessly complicated by being described as "Marchade 'El Amor por Tres Naranjas'." Oxley plays suitable accompaniments.
Beethoven: Quintet, op. 16. Mozart: Quintet K. 452 (both in E flat). Walter Gieseking, piano, with the Philharmonia Wind Quartet. Angel 35303, $4.98.	Records have rarely offered matched virtuosity to equal the sounds produced by Cecil James, bassoon, Bernard Walton, clarinet, Dennis Brain, horn and Sydney Sutcliffe, oboe, in collaboration with their fastidious pianistic partner. The Beethoven, in particular, abounds in joyous jousts of interplay. The Mozart is equally well played, but with a trace too much of delicacy and "devotion." More ease would be welcome. Excellent engineering.
Brahms: Sonatas, op. 120. Paul Doktor, viola, with Nadia Reisenberg, piano. Westminster WN 18114, $4.98.	Doktor and Reisenberg make an uncommonly well-balanced pair for these works, providing not merely informed musicianship but also a give-and-take that distinguishes collaboration from toleration. Few violists of recent years have given so much personal accent to these works as Doktor, and they can absorb all he provides. Fine sound.
Franck: Quartet in D. Loewenguth Quartet. Epic LC 3227, $3.98.	Another first-class performance of this work which is also welcome for renewing our acquaintance with the excellent Loewenguth ensemble. The rather strenuous style they apply to Franck doesn't appeal to me as much as the more refined playing of the Parrenin Quartet (see RECORDINGS, May 26), but it has abundant vigor and musicality. Rather swollen recording, especially in movement 1.
Lehár: "El Conde de Luxemburgo." Luis Sagi-Vela, Elsa Marval, and Luisa de Cordoba, with Ricardo Estevarena conducting the Orquesta de Camera de Madrid. Montilla FM 65, $4.98.	A Latinized rendering of Lehár, with the voices mostly good and the direction of a discriminating sort. However, a proper study of the verbal values involved is impeded by the lack of German or English equivalent of Spanish text in the brochure. Recording from Spain is improving in quality.
Liszt: "Transcendental Etudes." Alexander Borovsky, piano. VOX P1 9690, $4.98.	In all the lore of recorded history, few pianists (I am almost tempted to write none) have attempted the finger-breaking task to which Borovsky addresses himself. The reasons for such avoidance are all too apparent in the results. Borovsky's knowledge of the style is peerless, as some of the slower etudes testify. However, the really difficult ones are blurred, overpedalled, and too much shadowed by a sense of labor to result in enjoyable listening. Good enough sound.
Milhaud: "Scaramouche," Chopin: "Rondo," etc. Vitya Vronsky and Victor Babin, duo-pianists. Decca DL 9790, $3.98.	Vronsky and Babin are past masters of the bright, incisive style appropriate to Milhaud's dashing piece, and their latest version of it is notable for the faithful likeness it presents of their fine piano sound. The Chopin Rondo (Op. 73) is a minor piece well played, the Schubert fantasy (Op. 103) a major piece of the four-hand repertory overprovided with "finesse" but insufficient substance. Completing the generous portion is Liszt's "Concerto Pathétique," a work compounded of all the master's fluency and, alas, all his banality.
Quilter: "To Julia," "Seven Elizabethan Lyrics," etc. Alexander Young, tenor, with Gordon Watson, piano. Argo Westminster WN 18152, $4.98.	The wistful charm of these songs is rather limited for those not indoctrinated with them in youth, and Young is hardly so persuasive a singer as to overcome their lack of general appeal. For that matter, he is inclined to sag from the pitch, and his articulation of texts is not distinguished for clarity. Watson is a pianist of more than average competence. Inept microphone placement gives the illusion that Watson is singing from under the piano. Three Blake settings and three of Shelley are also heard.
Scarlatti: Twelve Sonatas. Fernando Valenti, harpsichord. Westminster WN 18112, $4.98.	Another (Volume XIII) addition, and an impressive one, the Valenti's relentless pursuit of "complete" in the mammoth catalogue of Scarlatti sonatas. Included herein are Longo Nos. 54, 65, 107, 125, 164, 233, 269, 311, 354, 369 and 445, plus Supplemento No. 3. If anything, Valenti's artistry has gained in flexibility and dynamic gradations since the series started, but the types of works tend to duplicate themselves, which is scarcely surprising in a collection now totaling over seventy. Fine harpsichord sound.
Scarlatti: Sonatas (Longo Nos. 5, 23, 286, 288, 375, 387, 396, 449, 457, 465, 474, and 487). Maria Tipo, piano. VOX PL 9940, $4.98.	Excellently fluent, well-fingered versions of works mostly familiar in the concert hall repertory. In addition to her good mechanical equipment, Miss Tipo shows, in several of the more expressive works, a feeling for phrase and color that produces something personal. Above average piano sound.
Shostakovitch: Preludes and Fugues (Nos. 6, 7, 8, 20, 22, 24). The composer at the piano. Capitol P 18013, $3.98.	More of the provocative series of works written in the wake of the composer's visit to Leipzig in 1950 for a Bach celebration. As in those previously heard on Concert Hall (1314, offerings Nos. 2, 3, 4, 12, 14 and 16) Shostakovich is a more persuasive pleader for his own case than most composer-pianists (unless the name happens to be Rachmaninoff or Godowsky). Perhaps it will eventually be a project for some such sympathetic contemporary as Glenn Gould to do whole series in sequence. The piano sound is satisfactory. —I. K.

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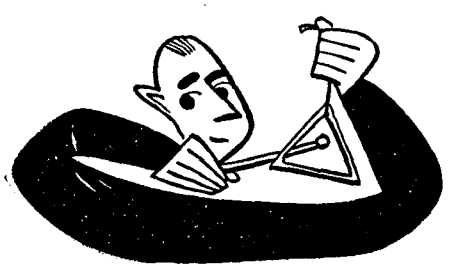
THE OTHER SIDE

OLDSTERS IN BLOOM

LONDON.

ON APRIL 26 EMI took a leaf out of Mr. G. A. Briggs's book and hired the Royal Festival Hall for a large-scale demonstration of stereosonic tape recordings. For anyone accustomed to live performances in the same surroundings it was, I regret to say, not a very impressive occasion. Despite the use of a large array of speakers on each side of the platform, and the alleged deployment of amplification totalling 150 watts, the sound was frequently distorted and lackluster, while the illusion of stereophony was of hit-and-miss variety for anyone not sitting on the center-line of the speakers. And what can one say of a presentation which involved a "ghost orchestra" of empty chairs and illuminated music stands, not to mention the attendant who came and raised the top of the Steinway for a Liszt "Hungarian Rhapsody," after which he lowered it for the accompaniment to a Mozart song? Techniques designed for domestic consumption clearly cannot always succeed in a large hall by a mere process of inflation, and nothing that I heard at this demonstration came within hailing distance of the best "3-D" sound offered in Cinerama productions.

If news of the May record releases have to be held over for consideration at a later date, we must not overlook two important musical events of recent weeks, both of which are virtually certain to leave their marks in recorded form. On April 22 and 24 we were able, through the agency of the BBC's Third Programme, to welcome into our homes once more the incomparable voice of Kirsten Flagstad who had in her sixty-first year returned to these shores in order to take part in two studio performances of Gluck's "Alceste" (in the original Italian version). The way in which her vocal apparatus has withstood the ravages of time can only be described as miraculous: except for a very occasional, slightly strained top note Flagstad sounded younger and fresher than in the last few years preceding her "retirement." For all her supremacy as a Wagnerian heroine she is, as she once declared, "a classical girl at heart," and the recording of "Alceste," which was scheduled to follow the broadcasts, may well prove to be our most treasured memento of her art.



Retirement, whether temporary or permanent, is a thought which does not appear to enter the mind of Ralph Vaughan Williams, notwithstanding the fact that in five months time he will be celebrating his eighty-fourth birthday. No doubt he is already planning his Ninth Symphony, but meanwhile—on May 2, to be exact—his No. 8 in D minor received its first performance at the hands of the Hallé Orchestra under Sir John Barbirolli (to whom it is dedicated). The work is shorter than any of its predecessors; it bears no special name and shows no evidence of any "program." The scoring calls for an orchestra of modest dimensions with the addition, however, af "all the 'phones and 'spiels known to the composer"; in his use of the vibraphone in the splendid first movement (already nicknamed "seven variations in search of a theme") and his deployment of a veritable carillon in the brief, rumbustious finale, V. W. continues to show an interest in unconventional sonorities, an interest that led to works for harmonica and bass tuba and was strongly in evidence in the "Sinfonia Antartica." In the middle movements the composer has refused to mix his basic colors, for the witty Scherzo is scored for wind instruments only and is succeeded by a serene and lovely slow movement for strings whose kinship with the "Tallis Fantasia" and parts of the Fifth Symphony is almost too obvious to mention. Few would suggest that No. 8 can be counted among Vaughan Williams's more profound utterances, but it is a decidedly accessible and most enjoyable score, composed with obvious relish by one who is as young in heart as he is wise in experience. Symphony and composer were enthusiastically acclaimed by the Mancunian first night audience; we shall, of course, have a recording before long, and I can foresee the finale being "flogged to death" at next year's Audio Fair!

—THOMAS HEINITZ.

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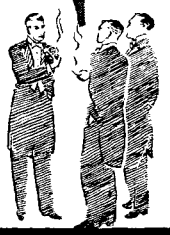

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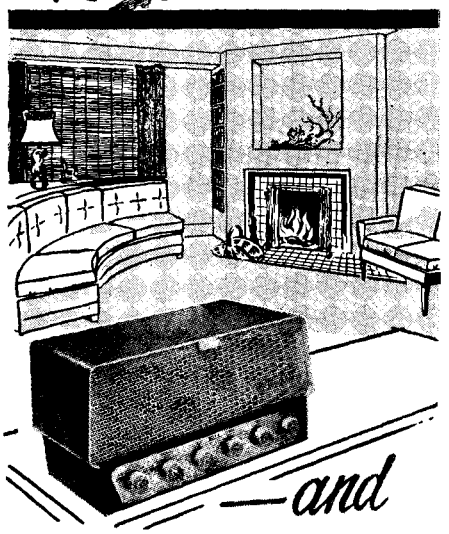

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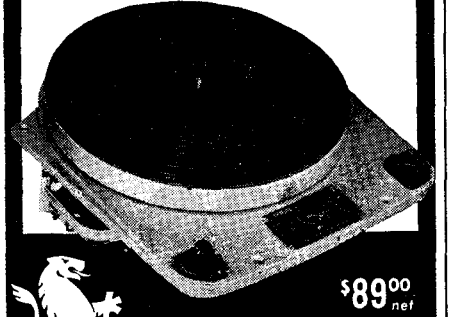

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Couperin Uncorked

By PUTNAM ALDRICH

FRANÇOIS COUPERIN is not unknown as a keyboard composer. Selections from his works are included in printed and recorded collections of early music and a few of his short pieces with descriptive titles occasionally find their way to concert programs. Many music lovers will be surprised, however, to find that Couperin's harpsichord works, as issued by Oiseau Lyre (OL 50052-50067 $79.88), fill both sides of sixteen LP records. Learning this, they may still doubt whether this composer of elegant trifles can have produced a substantial amount of music that deserves serious attention. Any such doubt should be dispelled at once by those who are historically minded enough to appreciate the works of Racine, Molière, Watteau, or Lebrun and are willing to take some trouble to find out what Couperin was driving at. For François Couperin was a classicist—a Baroque classicist, it is true, but this qualification also applies to Racine and Molière. Greatness is not to be measured by length, and adequate listening will reveal these little pieces to be true and complete musical expressions of the spirit and values of the age of Louis XIV.

The essence of classicism, as Valéry has observed, lies in the fact that the artist's goal is not to innovate but to perfect, and by perfecting his work to render it independent of time and place. In doing so, however, he by no means disregards the conditions of his own time and place. The classic writer, such as Racine or Molière, is a passionate artist who has accepted the restrictions imposed by his environment—by court life, "good taste," a stylized vocabulary, the three unities and a circumscribed form—and is still able to communicate his emotions. It is precisely the tension between the artist's passionate feeling and his self control that gives the work its force. This power cannot, of course, be felt until one has penetrated beneath the outward surface of stylized form and idiom. The reader who is puzzled by every archaic turn of phrase or distressed by the artificiality of the alexandrine has not progressed very far towards an appreciation of Racine. Similarly, the listener who is exasperated by Couperin's incessant ornamentation or bored by the implacable recurrences of the *rondeau*'s symmetrical theme has not yet begun to hear the extraordinary subtlety and variety of emotional expression that are conveyed through these limited means.

The descriptive titles of many of Couperin's pieces might lead one to suppose that he was more concerned with writing objective program music than with expressing his personal sentiments. In a sense, to be sure, this music is programmatic, but in a very special sense. Its composition was governed, esthetically, by the so-called "doctrine of the affections," which required that every musical composition should express or describe some particular emotion of the human soul. The relation between this ideal and the use of such apparently objective titles as "The Alarm Clock," "The Little Fly," or "The Little Windmills" when he writes, is clearly defined by Jean-Jacques Rousseau: "The art of the musician consists not in painting objects directly but in inducing states of mind similar to those that would be their presence." The function of music, then, was not to imitate the actual ringing of the alarm clock, the buzzing of the fly or the motion of the windmills but to present musical figures that would evoke in the listener moods which his experience would associate with these objects. The aesthetic doctrine further imposed a purely formal requirement—each piece or movement must consist entirely of the elaboration and exploitation of a basic motive (appropriate to the affection) that is stated at the outset. Any use of contrast or development within a single piece is thus automatically excluded.

Such is the nature of the limitations that Couperin imposed upon himself. Within them, in the ensemble of his work, he was able to present as complete and precise a commentary on life in Paris and Versailles in the early eighteenth century as can be found in any set of memoirs. There are, for instance, a number of pieces (L'Auguste [Louis XIV], La Forqueray, La Princesse de Sens, La Garnier etc.) that he calls "kinds of portraits that have been found quite good likenesses when I have played them." In these he evokes the dignity, charm languor, wit or vivacity of the individual subjects, which include the King, ladies, nobles, officials and musicians of the court.

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There are also "portraits" of places and scenes, dancers, strolling players and acrobats, as well as pastoral pieces, a satire on the Musicians' Union and a burlesque on the antics of Dominican monks. Noteworthy in that it runs through the whole gamut of "affections" is a series called "Les Folies Françoises," of which the successive sections are entitled: Virginity, Modesty, Ardor, Jealousy, Perseverance, Hope, Fidelity, Languor, Coquetry, Frenzy, and Despair. And a single exposure to the intense tragedy of "La Passacaille" should be enough to dispel any illusion that Couperin's expressive powers were confined to superficial charm and wit.

RUGGERO GERLIN, who performs these works for Oiseau Lyre, is an accomplished harpsichordist with a long experience and a thorough familiarity with the intricacies of eighteenth-century style. His playing is brilliant and technically impeccable. In his registration he takes full advantage of the myriad shades of tone color that are available on his magnificent Pleyel harpsichord. This may be regarded as quite legitimate, for, although Couperin could not have obtained all these effects on his own instrument he showed, in his few suggestions for registration, that he appreciated the expressive possibilities afforded by varied timbres. The brilliance and color of Gerlin's playing are particularly effective in rendering Couperin's moods of humor and irony.

In spite of all this, one must confess to a certain disappointment in the interpretation of many pieces. The execution of the ornaments is technically correct, but Gerlin often fails to adjust them to the appropriate emotional context. Nor does he make use of the many accepted possibilities of rhythmic alteration of the written note-values. Many of the less spectacular pieces are performed perfunctorily and in a rhythm that can only be described as "plodding." Perhaps Couperin himself put his finger on the root of the trouble when he wrote, in his famous treatise on the art of playing the harpsichord: "Experience has taught me that vigorous hands that are capable of playing the fastest and brightest movements are not always those that succeed best in pieces that should have tenderness and sentiment; and I frankly confess that I prefer things that move me to those that astonish me."

There are, perhaps, enough good performances in this collection to justify its purchase if you don't mind sitting through a few hours of boredom to find them. But if you want to be *sure* of a good performance of Couperin get out Landowska's old 78s of the 1930s. They are *all* good.

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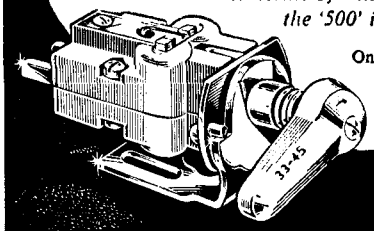

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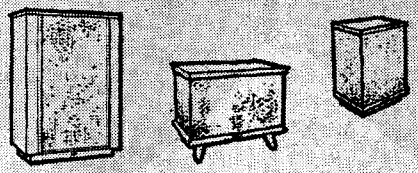

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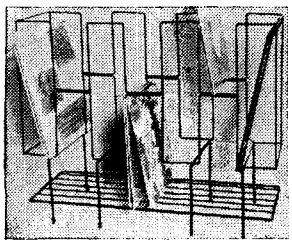

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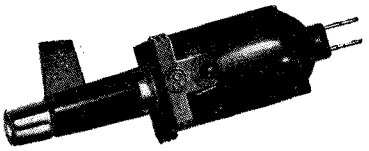

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THE AMEN CORNER

Santayana to Cyrus St. Clair

FOR the pleasure of jazz fanciers who may be getting behind in their collateral reading, I will quote certain remarks of George Santayana to Van Wyck Brooks in a letter from Rome on May 22, 1927. The philosopher is talking about the American aping of European culture, and he says of American artists of this tendency: "Instead of being interested in what they are and what they do and see, they are interested in what they think they would like to be and see and do: it is a misguided ambition, and moreover, if realized, fatal, because it wears out all their energies in trying to bear fruits which are not of their species . . . what Lewis Mumford calls 'the pillage of the past' (of which he thinks I am guilty too) is worse than useless. I therefore think that art, etc. has a better soil in the ferocious 100 per cent America than in the intelligentsia of New York. It is veneer, rouge, estheticism, art museums, new theatres, etc. that make America impotent. The good things are football, kindness, and jazz bands."

This is a happy text to preach upon, and I will begin by saying that Miles Davis, for me the warmest, most heartful of modern trumpets, is back again with a fine quintet program. His mood is generally musing and lyrical, and his invention, as always, full of delightful turns. The themes include such standards as "S'posin," "Just Squeeze Me," and "No Greater Love," and a savory bit of exoticism by Benny Golson called "Stable Mates." Possibly the mates referred to are camels; the number suggests the stately but syncopated progress of a caravan across the Sahara. Davis's excellent supporting cast are John Coltrane, tenor sax; Red Garland, piano; Paul Chambers, bass; "Philly" Joe Jones, drums (Prestige LP 7014).

Most of the items to be mentioned this month are in fine accord with my recent campaign on behalf of middle tempos (as against dirges or panics). I am pleased to note, in *Down Beat* magazine, that the remarkable pianist-composer Lennie Tristano is marching under the same banner—indeed, he may be said to be heading the parade, in which I figure to myself as one of those rather winded, middle-aged snare drummers in the rear of the band. The easier rhythms are honored this month by the West Coast pianist Hampton Hawes. His previous discs have been full of speed and glitter; this is his most relaxed program to date, and a fine thing to hear, with Red Mitchell, bass, and Chuck Thompson, drums: "This is Hampton Hawes" (Contemporary C3515). I have only to complain that somewhat too often for my taste Hawes has a rush of arpeggios to the right hand.

One of the most ingratiating groups in chamber jazz is the drummer Chico Hamilton's quintet, which finds him surrounded by the unusual combination of Buddy Collette, alto and tenor saxes, clarinet and flute; Fred Katz, cello; Jim Hall, guitar; and Carson Smith, bass. They waft us rhythmic zephyrs from the Pacific. Their second LP program is a mixture of standards and originals by various members of the band. The leader, it might be emphasized, is a paragon of drumming delicacy (Pacific Jazz 1216).

The team of Lionel Hampton, vibraharp, and Oscar Peterson, piano, are masters of jazz *intime*, and they are irresistible when backed by their familiar rhythm section: Buddy Rich, drums; Ray Brown, bass; and Herb Ellis, guitar. A new disc shows them off in long treatments of "I Can't Get Started," "Hallelujah," "Sweethearts on Parade," "Love for Sale," and "Hamp's Boogie" (American Recording Society G 403).

The revival market this month affords one of my own choicest favorites. I think that if I had to choose one attempt by latter-day jazz men to invoke the spirit (and a good deal of the letter) of ragtime, it would be that of the clarinetist Tony Parenti's Ragtime Band. This is an extraordinary combination for the job . . . The New Orleans leader is surrounded by Wild Bill Davidson, trumpet; Jimmy Archey, trombone; Ralph Sutton, piano; Danny Barker, banjo; Cyrus St. Clair, tuba; and Baby Dodds, drums. The numbers brilliantly arranged by Parenti include such classic Scott Joplin rags as "Swipesy Cakewalk" and "Sunflower Slow Drag," and there is also James Scott's "Grace and Beauty." There is no smell of archeology about this music. Wild Bill Davidson takes off in the hallelujah spirit, and every time the band stops playing Sutton and the drummer George Wettling keep up the fun. These discs have not appeared since their original issue in 1947-48 and they are Americana, first class (Riverside RLP 12-205).

—WILDER HOBSON.

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Letters to the *RECORDINGS* Editor

GRATEFUL SUFFERER

WHENEVER A FRIEND calls to warn me that there's another Bridey item in *The Saturday Review* I moan, "Why don't they stop beating me?" But this time I was pleasantly surprised. Many thanks for your delightfully clever "Murphism on LP" [*SR* Apr. 28]. Perhaps you hadn't intended this as a pro-Bridey page. But on me—especially from *SR*—it looks good already. Your article was all the more welcome because I had just read the verdict of a reviewer in *The Omaha World Herald*. He indicated that it wasn't easy to find anything in this world worse than the Bridey book. Nevertheless, he had managed to discover it—the Bridey record.

MOREY BERNSTEIN.

New York, N. Y.

THE FORGOTTEN MWMTMWMJ

IN MY ARTICLE on jazz a&r men ["The Men Who Make the Men Who Make Jazz," *SR* May 12], I inadvertently omitted two of the newer and more venturesome aural chefs in the field. One is Jules Colomby of Signal Records. Colomby's production thus far is small but select wtih the last two albums—by Duke Jordan and Gigi Gryce—among the more nutritious of the year. The second goof on my part concerned Tom Wilson of the Transition label in Cambridge, Mass. Transition, like Fantasy on the West Coast, travels more than most companies to record jazz not only in its most populated centers like New York and Los Angeles but also in such rather neglected but fruitful areas as Detroit, Boston, and even Tennessee. At the end of my article I pointed out that with the part-time exception of Henry Glover of King there were no Negro head a&r men in jazz. Mr. Wilson is an exception. Would there were more.

NAT HENTOFF,
associate editor,
Down Beat *magazine.*

New York, N. Y.

DIN IN THE DELL

"FESTIVALS IN AMERICA" [*SR* May 26] embraced New York Stadium, Hollywood Bowl concerts, and numerous little towns in the West and South. But there is no mention of Robin Hood Dell in Philadelphia, the summer home of the Philadelphia Orchestra. After a $300,000 renovation the Dell will open to a series of concerts, led off by Ormandy, with Serkin as soloist. All for free! Are we, after all, just a suburb of New York? Surely the Dell deserves as much consideration as the Linville and Brevard, N. C., organizations, excellent as they may be.

EARL P. REES.

Philadelphia, Pa.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Pardon our oversight. The worthy Dell offers a full season of symphony fare from June 18 to July 18, with concerts every Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday evening. Seating capacity has been expanded, new grass and shrubbery have been added, and the renovated Dell shell has been moved to one side—admitting cross-breezes from the Schuylkill River.*

KREISLER ANYONE?

I HOPE THERE is a plan in the offing to make an album of Kreisler's playing of the great concertos: Beethoven, Brahms, and Mendelssohn, not to mention others less well known, in addition to sonatas, lighter music, etc.

MRS. CLAYTON BISSELL.

Signal Mountain, Tenn.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Though several Kreisler reissues were recently dropped from RCA Victor's Treasury Series—for lack of buyers—the company is working on a plan to provide certain items, notably the Mendelssohn Concerto and Mozart No. 4, to interested collectors.*

FROM CHAPTER TO POST

IN HIS PIECE "Music from Madison Avenue" [*SR* May 12] Irving Kolodin refers to the "Advertising No. 209 *Chapter* of the American Legion." Boy! won't this raise the hackles around the editorial offices of the *American Legion* magazine! "Chapter" huh? Those egg-heads on *The Saturday Review* put us in the same boat with those Sling-a-Pi Greek fraternity outfits! They're *Posts* in the Legion.

HENRY SMITH.

New York, N. Y.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *"Posts" is duly noted by us pillars of intellectualism.*

MADAME ON THE MAP

LONDON HAS DONE better by the Wagnerian public than recording the questionable performances of the Bayreuth presentations of "Götterdämmerung." Instead it has secured the tapes of Kirsten Flagstad, aged sixty-one, as Brünnhilde, from her Norwegian broadcasts of this past January. This will be an uncut recording of the score unlike the same but edited version that James Fassett broadcast for CBS recently. Other plans for Madame include a "Fidelio" and "Alcestes" with Jobin and the BBC Symphony, "Die Walküre," Act I, and a Wagnerian program from Vienna with Hans Knappertsbusch! Rumor also has it that Madame has recorded four new *Lieder* recitals in London for London. Rejoice!

GERALD NORMAN FITZGERALD.

Houston, Texas.

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